

# HISTORY

POCUMTUCK VALLEY MEMORIAL  
AND  
ASSOCIATION

## PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

POCUMTUCK VALLEY

## MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

An Account of the 1939 Annual Meeting

Report by Keeper of the Sheldon Collection

Frances N. S. Allen

Frances N. S. Allen

Reverend Clair E. L.

Willard H. Pierce

Elizabeth H. Wells

Albert L. Wing

Northern Neighbors

Living History

Pine Hill—A Place Apart

A List of Officers, Trustees, Committees and Auditors



N. Theresa Meloy

Marret C. Whiting

George B. Dwight

Charles A. Dyer

Charles E. Dyer

James Wells

John E. Gale

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VOL. IX.

It is believed that an edition will be pleasing to those who are interested in the Old Deerfield region and its people and in the subjects discussed in the papers printed. The edition is limited. The several publications by this association are listed inside the back cover of this pamphlet.

DEERFIELD, MASS., U. S. A.

Respectfully submitted,

PUBLISHED BY THE ASSOCIATION

IN PARTS

Memorial Hall,  
Deerfield, Mass.

HISTORY

AND

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Pocumtuck Valley

MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION



VOL. IX.

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# POCUMTUCK VALLEY MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

## REPORT

This is the first of several "annuals" which will together constitute Volume IX of the "History and Proceedings" of this association. It contains original matter and has been edited and published under a vote by the association at its annual meeting on February 28, 1939.

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Respectfully submitted,

FRANCIS NIMS THOMPSON, *President*;

W. HERBERT NICHOLS, *Treasurer*.

Memorial Hall,  
Deerfield, Mass.





## SIXTY-NINTH ANNUAL MEETING—1939

*At Memorial Hall in Old Deerfield*, on "the last Tuesday in February," members and friends of the "P.V.M.A." occupied the curious old chairs and benches in the Council Room. President Thompson, seated at a gate-legged table in the corner at the left of the tall round coal stove, called the meeting to order at two o'clock and announced that, before proceeding to the business of the meeting, tributes to the memory of *five former members* of the association would be heard. These persons, excepting Dr. Pierce, had served on the council. Mrs. Lucy Cutler Kellogg of Greenfield spoke of him, and Judge Thompson of Albert L. Wing. Walter A. Dyer of Amherst had written of Reverend Clair F. Luther of that town, and that brief study was read by Miss Minnie Ellen Hawks. The papers on Mrs. Elizabeth H. Wells and Mrs. Frances N. S. Allen were read by Miss Harriet E. Childs and Mrs. Sheldon J. Howe.

*The president reported* on behalf of the executive committee; and said that, after presiding at these meetings for some years during Mrs. Sheldon's presidency, he still felt that he was acting "on behalf of" the Sheldons who had organized the Memorial Association in 1870 and carried it on until a year ago, and that so far as possible the policies of Mrs. Sheldon had been continued. The executive committee had appointed Miss Mellen as keeper of the Sheldon Collection and it has been well cared for. The hurricane of September 21 made necessary the cutting of some trees near Memorial Hall and the school-yard, and a diseased tree which was interfering with growth of a fine shade tree was also removed.

His report suggested that the proceedings at these annual meetings might be published each year in pamphlet form, so that the papers would be promptly available





(with possibly increased sales) and so that the labor and expense of publication would come annually instead of at intervals of some nine years. The president reported having prepared for printing the proceedings for the period 1930-1938, and gave an estimate of the probable cost of publication.

*Miss Mellen's report*, showing increased acquisitions and attendance, was read, and the treasurer made a favorable financial report. These were accepted by unanimous vote. The officers and trustees who had served during the past year were reelected, and Mrs. Kellogg and Mr. Coffin were elected to fill the vacancies in the council. Publication of Volume VIII of the "History and Proceedings" and of annual pamphlets was unanimously approved.

*John E. Gale, Esquire*, of Guilford, Vermont, president of the Windham County Historical Society, presented in an interesting way an informing account of the "Northern Neighbors of the Pocumtucks" and described artifacts left about an Indian village, uncovered by the flood of 1936, and collected by himself and his co-workers, one of whom joined in the informal discussion with which the afternoon meeting closed.

*The council met*, following the corporation meeting, and reappointed the auditors and committees listed on another page. It was informed that Miss Elsie A. Catlin, having a life use of Frary House under the will of C. Alice Baker, had written the president of her intention to soon relinquish that interest; and all matters concerning that property were left in the hands of the Curators of the Frary House Estate.

*In the town hall*, at six o'clock, the women of Deerfield, ever loyal supporters of the old P.V.M.A., furnished an excellent supper. This and the meetings were well attended, though a discouraging cold rain was falling and the roads were icy. At 7.15 the president asked Professor William G. Avirett to read an appreciation of Mrs. Frances N. S. Allen which had been written by







*Miss Whiting.* This was followed by the singing of three selections by the Glee Club of Deerfield Academy under the efficient direction of Mr. Oatley,—an annual contribution to the pleasure of the auditors which is highly appreciated. To the club and to the generous women of Deerfield the thanks of the association were extended.

The speaker of the evening was a vice-president of the organization, *Edward E. Whiting* of Newton; author, columnist and lecturer. He read a paper on "Living History," which he made the more vital and interesting by frequent and characteristic comments, often tying into the story parallel happenings during the history of Deerfield. Judge Thompson then read a short paper on *Pine Hill*, in Deerfield north meadow, written in fulfillment of a promise made by him to Mrs. Sheldon. In it he quoted from three poems by Rodolphus Campbell, the hermit poet of the hill.

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## REPORT BY KEEPER OF THE SHELDON COLLECTION

Notwithstanding a season of abundant rains, culminating in a hurricane in September, which stopped the flow of visitors who usually come to Memorial Hall in October, there was a larger attendance than last year, 4,644, and greater activity along all lines.

Visitors came from 44 states of the Union, and from 11 foreign countries, including New Zealand.

On the whole, it has been an encouraging year, with the promise of a better one next year (1939), when tourists who come to see the World's Fair at New York, turn their attention to near-by New England with its numerous attractions.

There have been contributed 46 books and pamphlets, 25 copies of old newspapers, and 68 miscellaneous articles.

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cles.

For a number of years we have received but little china, and we have greatly desired gifts of china and glass in order that the Hackley Cupboard on the third floor of the Wing might be filled.

We are fortunate in having received two such donations: one from Mrs. Harrie Nims of Boston, consisting of 15 pieces of china and glass, several from the Orient in perfect condition, which once belonged to Justus Nims of Deerfield; the second, consisting of five pieces, was given by Mrs. H. W. Bell of Springfield.

Mrs. Nims' gift included a very old rocking-chair, the rockers worn thin in the middle, and a child's chair, each of which came down in the family of Justus Nims, great-great-grandson of Godfrey Nims.

Besides the china, Mrs. Bell's gift included embroideries, 17 pieces of lace mostly hand-work, many of them having once belonged to the great-grandmother of the donor, who desired to place them in some institution where they would be preserved and appreciated.

There was besides a sandalwood fan from India, a tiny green silk parasol with ivory tips and top, and a picture of the mansion, built in Newburyport in 1810, by that eccentric man, Lord Timothy Dexter.

Two handsome oil portraits of Noadiah L. Arms, 1794-1841, and his wife, Hannah W. Arms, were given by their granddaughter, Miss Jessie L. Van Vliet of New York City. The portraits may be seen on the third floor of the fire-proof wing.

The gray silk wedding dress of Mary Graves of Williamsburg, who married John Montague of Sunderland on Oct. 7, 1830, was given by her granddaughter, Miss Martha Montague Russell of Bronx, N. Y. This is the last wedding dress that we can accept, as the Domestic Productions Room is now full to overflowing.

The Kendrick table of the type of 1700 was presented by Mr. Milton J. Davenport of Colrain in memory of his mother, Lucie A. Stone Davenport, 1859-1900.

We have also received from the estate of J. M. Arms





Sheldon, a mass of material, 34 items in all, relating to the literary work of Mr. and Mrs. George Sheldon.

A valuable contribution from Mrs. Sheldon's estate is the rocking chair of Persis Hoyt, who was Mr. Sheldon's grandmother. It has the original elm bark seat.

Respectfully submitted,

N. THERESA MELLEN.

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## FRANCES NEWTON SYMMES ALLEN

BY MARGARET C. WHITING

When Frances Newton Symmes Allen died last spring in the week following Easter, we, who were her Deerfield neighbors, lost more than her gay morning greeting at the post office, or the cordial chat on the street, or the little doorstep call; for we were bereft of a friend who gave to all of us her attentive interest in our affairs, who listened with sympathy to our troubles, who rejoiced in our bits of good fortune and whose hospitable welcome we had but to seek, to find. In return she modestly refrained from telling about the larger world to which she had belonged, and of the part she had played therein. She bore her own griefs in quiet, she told little of her achievements and the recognition she had won. Yet hers was a life well spent, full of variety and change of scene and social connections, one which had taken her from a Kentucky plantation to Cincinnati, to Chicago, to Providence, and the Connecticut valley and finally, at the end, to Old Deerfield. Each of these diverse experiences had left its mark upon her responsive nature. They gave her the poise of manner that was a part of her charm.

It would be interesting to try to trace the mixed causes of all these experiences, and their effect upon her many-sided character, for both North and South had





made their contribution. Her father, who belonged to the Newton family of merchants and sea-faring folk of Rhode Island, came from old Newport, with its careful adherence to the New England conventions. He died so soon after Frances' birth he had no part in her upbringing, yet many strictly northern traits in her character betrayed her claim on that heritage, and she herself was conscious of being swayed by influences other than those which surrounded her youth, spent on a bluegrass plantation in the midst of her mother's large family clan. To that young mother, lovely, cultured and gracious, Frances must have owed her social talents, her agreeable air of cosmopolitan ease; and from her southern inheritance came the particular quality of her pride. Scrupulously kept unseen, pride yet was one of her dominating traits, held in leash, as it was, by her religious faith. It was from her southern mother and grandmother Smith that Frances Newton took that devout loyalty to the Catholic Church which distinguished her character. So liberal in her attitude towards other beliefs that more than half her closest friends were Protestants, yet her faith in her own church remained constant and unwavering.

When Frances was about eight years old her mother married Colonel Symmes, a man of her own class, and the child thereafter bore her stepfather's name added to her own, in accordance with his desire. At this time she was sent to the school of the Convent of the Sacred Heart at Clifton, and later to a private school where she was fitted for the first great venture of her education. It was an almost unheard-of ambition for a southern girl to even wish to enter a college, and only Frances' mother backed the project. When the permission to have a year at Smith was wrested from the family conclave, the situation was so little comprehended by anyone, that her anxious mother wrote a personal request to President Seelye to meet her 16-year-old daughter at the train when she should arrive in Northampton,—an incident



that has become a stock anecdote in the annals of Smith College.

Though the family fortune could give Frances Newton Symmes only this brief experience in solid training, it was the springboard from which she took her undeviating course. Her love of learning woke her talent for teaching and all her life the two were one in her esteem. With a thoroughness that distinguished her ability to learn everything within reach, the capacity for close research, and her unflagging industry in the pursuit of knowledge, she possessed also the gift of imparting what she knew to others, of training young minds, of influencing and inspiring the love of learning which was her own personal enthusiasm. Frances' success as a teacher was assured from the start. After a short season in a private school in Cincinnati, she became a member of the faculty of the exclusive Kenwood Institute for Girls in Chicago and from there proceeded, several years later, to the well-known Wheeler School in Providence where she was so successful she was to have become its headmistress, if, in 1908, she had not married James Adams Allen of Holyoke.

This important change marked the end of one career, but opened the way for the employment of a secondary talent that had always had its share in her intellectual development. The gift of writing prose and verse was used by her from childhood, and now, with leisure, Frances Allen turned to fiction as the next thing to do. She produced three successful novels which Houghton Mifflin published, within the following five years; the last, "The Invaders," a study of Polish immigrants, has had a lasting recognition and is still included in libraries as a valuable contribution to the subject. Then came the Great War, which put an end to so many delightful things, and Frances turned to editorial-writing and essays, published in various magazines and papers; finally she became a regular contributor to the Holyoke Daily Transcript of graceful short comments on current





affairs and this work she continued to within a few days before her last illness.

The long decline in health of her husband darkened the later years of her happy marriage, and when he dropped dead in the street in 1923, this final shock reduced Frances' nervous strength seriously. A complete change being imperative she left the city for the country she had always loved, and removed to our village, which had long known her as a frequent visitor, and was now chosen to be her last abiding place. Here, in the house she acquired some three years after, she lived the life we knew. Adapting herself, as she always did, to her surroundings, she found plenty to do in small ways that gave pleasure to her neighbors, and in spite of impaired health and vanished happiness for herself, she employed once again her teacher's gift for the benefit of the young Academy boys whom she welcomed each year to her best hospitality and friendly care. She joined the P. V. M. A. as soon as she came to Deerfield, and to its annual programs she contributed three valued papers and notes for another were found in her effects, showing the exhaustive reading which was her scrupulous method of preparation in such work.

We said: "She went too soon," but perhaps it was a going exactly to her mind. Without undue trouble for her friends, with only three days of suffering, uncomplaining and submissive to the care bestowed, a brilliant, useful and gallant life of 73 years full of work well done, that had gathered hosts of loyal friends and admirers, ceased, when Frances Newton Symmes Allen died on April 23rd, 1938.





## FRANCES NEWTON SYMMES ALLEN

BY MRS. MINNIE R. DWIGHT

It is highly right that this honored organization, the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, should pause in its discussions of history to pay tribute to Mrs. Frances Newton Symmes Allen, for it was here in Old Deerfield that this gifted woman found a way of life which was the sum of her ideals.

I am privileged to be permitted to speak of her overflowing personality before this group of men and women who seek deliberately to link themselves with the storied past of this valley. In a letter written to me just a year ago, Mrs. Allen rejoiced that she had been called from a happy membership in this body to a place higher in its councils, and she told me of the paper she was preparing to read at its annual meeting.

It will be noted that I have used her name in full. Once I questioned the use of so many names for the title page of her first novel, fearing that it would not catch the public attention. She said that her life had been many-chaptered; that the several divisions of her full name represented as many lives. That explains much: Mrs. Allen was one of those many-sided people who defy an adequate or complete summing up. She was able in a most unusual way to express and live those many sides.

Born, in the time when the Civil War was just closing, in the city of St. Louis and of an old southern family; and cradled in the generous easy-living of her family's tradition; she came—after a long lifetime of continuous journeying into far fields of mind and soul—to haven here, in this very stronghold of old New England. The human struggles that had taken place on this noble street of Old Deerfield were a far cry from her inheritance through Kentucky forebears, but they became



a part of her life: she chose to derive from them and to become a part of them.

Few people have the gift to open so many doors, to lift a voice in such varied tones, as blessed Mrs. Allen. She commanded so many ways of self-expression! Beauty was her dower, and grace: charm and hospitality were hers also. She wanted to teach, to travel, to write: to live. Smith College, then in its beginning, brought her to our own part of New England. Though she travelled much, and experienced much, it was devotion to a typically New England man which drew her back here. She made of marriage a sacramental experience in life. In marriage she found, with a completely different general personality, close kinship in the search for secrets of the wild flowers on the hills, the birds and the trees, and in the delight of life in the woods and by the streams, in star-shine, dawn and dusk. Much experience in many parts of the world had given to her the capacity for such joyous companionship. In extending hospitality the two were as one.

Even to the close of her days the seeds of her teaching years were blooming in her life through a long line of women who had drawn from her the grace to live well. There had been years, with less compelling interests than teaching and travelling, when Mrs. Allen had found the time to write much. Her novels, "Plain Path," "The Invaders" and "Her Wings," should be on the shelves of all New England libraries. They are rarely choice pictures of the period of which she was writing.

Over the course of many years Mrs. Allen's editorial writings, for the Holyoke Transcript-Telegram and other papers, covered a wide range of cultural and current themes; but she soared the highest when roused, by deeply grounded moral indignation, against the current letting-down of high principles in our every-day life; and the poet in her broke into song for the seasons of the year that draw us together—holy days and holidays.

In Frances Allen was a most rare meeting of the aus-





tere—a devotion to the simple things which could make them very great—and the regal by which she reached to the high places and the high things of life. All along the way she had been reaching out for the place where the streams of life met as they did in her own soul. Under the great elms of Deerfield she found her soul's search attained. Here she could have a complete and final flowering of her spirit: Here the maternal, which was so much of her being, could come to perfect fruition among shining youth from all places: Here her teaching gifts could have their way: Here she could think and write: Here she could meet men and women with whom she could have communion in cultural effort and adventure.

The very history of this wonderful old street, filled now to the full with the youngest in American life, was her joy. And in her "little house, her own house," she could break bread—of body, mind and spirit—with those who, like her, felt the touch of the wing of living history.

May I close this expression of my own understanding of my friend, Frances Newton Symmes Allen, with a paragraph written of her when she went from us?

"Her brilliance made her companion of the wind and waters, sunlight and stars; her mind soared in the high places; her courage met every challenge. She had the grace of mysticism; prayer was with her ecstasy; religion overflowed into every aspect of her life. Closely, within her own spirit, she walked with God in quiet ways."

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## REVEREND CLAIR FRANKLIN LUTHER

BY WALTER A. DYER

A youthfulness that belied his years, a never-failing boyish enthusiasm and zest, bodily vigor, and persistent optimism—these are the attributes that come most readily to mind in thinking of Clair Luther. Add to these a





scholarly mind, a remarkably retentive and accurate memory, and tireless energy in intellectual pursuits, and you have enumerated a few of the more outstanding characteristics of a man who, when he died last September, left a place that it will be impossible to fill, a place which he had made peculiarly his own in the life of the Connecticut Valley.

Clair Franklin Luther ("Martin" to his intimates) was born in Burton, Ohio, on October 3, 1866, the son of Ezra and Mary (Woods) Luther. Graduating from the high school in Painesville, Ohio, he attended Adelbert College, Western Reserve University, for two years and then transferred to Amherst College. After his graduation in 1889 he studied for three years at the Yale Divinity School.

He was ordained in Redding, Conn., on October 4, 1892, and preached in the Congregational Church there until 1898. He also served, in 1893-95, as principal of Hill Academy in Redding. Pastorates followed in Mystic, Conn., 1898-1905; Little Compton, R. I., 1905-07; Providence, R. I., 1907-08; New Haven, Conn., 1909-19; and Oxford, Mass., 1919-21.

In 1921 he moved to Amherst to become pastor of the Second Congregational Church, retiring in October, 1937, on the forty-fifth anniversary of his ordination. His Amherst pastorate of sixteen years was the longest in the history of the church. Leaving the parsonage, he and Mrs. Luther moved into the Strong House, the oldest house in Amherst and the home of the Amherst Historical Society, there to act as curator and to engage in those historical researches that so greatly interested him.

On June 14, 1894, he married Edith May Bouton of New Haven, who survives him and who continues to live in the beautiful and historic old house as curator. He also leaves two daughters, Mrs. Arthur H. Adams of New Haven and Mrs. William Nickerson of Baltimore, and two grandsons.



Mr. Luther was a born historian and his well educated mind was stored with historical lore, much of it of local importance. I have before me the Manual of the Second Congregational Church of Amherst, published in 1924, which contains a vastly interesting sketch of the history of the church and in which is preserved much valuable information that might otherwise be forgotten. That is the sort of thing he loved to do. He also wrote and directed an historical pageant on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the founding of the church, in 1932.

He loved nothing better than to delve into the obscure sources of local history. He was an accomplished antiquarian. He took great pride in the fact that he was the greatest living authority on the so-called Hadley chest. His book on that subject is as authoritative as it is beautiful; it represents years of patient research. He wrote also for magazines dealing with American history, genealogy, and antiques. He was a collector of old coins, old tools, and postage stamps.

He had been for four years president of the Amherst Historical Society and was a past president of the Amherst Ministers Association. In 1928 he became a member of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association and in 1934 was elected a member of its Council. He was a regular attendant at the annual meetings of the Association and contributed to their interest by taking part in the informal discussions and reminiscences. In 1933 he contributed a paper on "John Hawks as a Hadley Chest Maker," in which he traced the connection of John Hawks of Deerfield with a number of the Hadley chests. He was also president of the Luther Family Association and was at work on a nearly completed genealogy of the family at the time of his death.

He was a remarkably skilled craftsman, inheriting a special talent from his forbears. He enjoyed nothing more than working with his hands in his well equipped workshop. He possessed a knowledge of cabinet woods and was a great lover of trees. He was a good gardener.





As president and custodian of the Amherst Historical Society he spent many happy hours classifying and re-arranging its collections, and to work on the improvement of the house and grounds was a labor of love with him. These and many other interests and hobbies helped to keep him young.

He was always much interested in the affairs of Amherst College, his Alma Mater. For a number of years he had been secretary of his class, '89. He was also class agent for the Alumni Fund and a member of the Board of Inspectors for the Election of Trustees. He had served as historian for the Amherst chapter of his fraternity, Beta Theta Pi.

Though the diversity of his interests and activities doubtless had much to do with the preservation of his youthful spirit, that contagious enthusiasm which his friends knew so well was doubtless born in him as a part of his character and temperament. What obvious delight he took in a fresh clue to a hitherto unknown Hadley chest, or in the discovery of some bit of obscure historical or biographical lore! He was bursting with projects for the future and looked forward to years of activity in building up the Amherst Historical Society and its collections. In many ways his last year was the happiest of his life.

The news of his sudden death from an unsuspected heart ailment on September 11, 1938, came as a distinct shock to those of us who knew him well, since he had been apparently in such robust health, so energetic and optimistic, so young for his years. It seemed as if he were assured of years ahead for carrying on the useful activities which absorbed him. He was laid to rest in beautiful Wildwood Cemetery, Amherst. It is with genuine sorrow, and yet with a sort of joy in the memory of him, that I pay this inadequate tribute to my friend.





## WILLARD HENRY PIERCE

Born November 21, 1863, at Westminster West, Vt.  
Married September 5, 1888, at Bernardston, Nellie M. Gray  
Died September 24, 1938.

BY MRS. LUCY CUTLER KELLOGG

From John Pers of Old and New England did Dr. Pierce trace his descent, and from the Vermont branch of this family, represented by his grandparents, and his parents Nathan G., and Roxanna (Keach) Pierce, he inherited an independence of spirit, an intense love of country, devotion to duty and unswerving loyalty to his native state.

His paternal home at Westminster is now known as the Kurn Hattin Home for Boys, a fact in which he took pride, and that it is serving in the development of youth was to him a source of great satisfaction.

His earlier education was that of the village school, followed by advanced study at Saxtons River Academy. Having chosen the practice of medicine as his life work, he entered the Medical School at the University of Vermont, at Burlington, graduating therefrom in June, 1885. Of fine appearance and possessed of an unusually magnetic personality, he immediately attracted friends.

In September following his graduation, he came to Bernardston, assisting Dr. O. A. Wheeler, a former Vermont man; and when the latter soon after left for a California home, in search of health, Dr. Pierce took over Dr. Wheeler's practice. This he rapidly built up in Bernardston and the neighboring towns. Especially skillful in surgery he soon became recognized as a leader in this section in that line of work. His increasing practice out of town led to the establishment of an office in Greenfield, and a few months later, about 1892, to his



taking up his residence there, his home and office being in the present Best place on east Main Street.

Need for hospitalization for the many operations he was called upon to perform, led to his opening a private hospital in the so-called Major Keith place on west Main Street. The immediate success of this demonstrated to the other medical men of the locality the feasibility of the undertaking and encouraged them to campaign vigorously for the establishment of a public hospital, something which had been much discussed but about which nothing of a constructive nature had been done. When the Franklin County Public Hospital was finally opened, Dr. Pierce, with characteristic generosity, closed his own and donated his furnishings and equipment to the new institution, thereby giving material aid to the foundation of the hospital which was due in so large a measure to his initiative.

Upon the opening of the Farren Hospital at Montague City he was honored by appointment as head of the medical staff, which position he held many years, and was always thereafter actively associated with that hospital.

After some years, returning to Bernardston to make his home, though still retaining his Greenfield office, his attractive, modernized residence there became one of the social centers of the town.

Not a seeker of public office, and having no time had he been so inclined, he did serve as town auditor.

Interested in the Unitarian church, he was a regular attendant, a generous contributor to its maintenance, and an efficient member of the board of trustees.

Always fond of the best literature and a great reader, he found ample opportunity for service on the Board of Trustees of Cushman Library and was long chairman of the board. Both his wife and daughter Roxy having served as librarians, after the death of the latter in 1918, Dr. and Mrs. Pierce took an especial interest and pride in fitting up a "Children's Corner" in the library as a





memorial to her. He was a member of the Massachusetts Medical Society, the Franklin County District Medical Society and the Connecticut Valley Medical Association, and had held the office of Medical Examiner.

A thirty-second degree Mason, he was affiliated with the Masonic bodies in Greenfield and Springfield.

Dr. Pierce especially prized his membership in the Mount Mansfield Trout Club, at Stowe, Vermont, close to the majestic peak of Mount Mansfield. There he was wont to spend his annual vacations, and in association with many illustrious sons of Vermont, he always found congenial company, in one of the most beautiful sections of New England.

In Bernardston he took a deep interest in the meetings of the Senior Club, of which he was a member, enjoying the sociability always in evidence at the gatherings.

From middle life on, his appreciation of the best in the life of the older generations found expression in his acquisition of many valuable antiques; and when he relinquished his practice his offices were completely furnished with them, lending an air of quiet dignity, rest and richness, difficult to attain with modern pieces. One felt that the spirit of the past, mingling with the hurry of present day living, exerted a needed balance. Perhaps this love of antiques may have been in part the outgrowth of his studies of ancient lore.

His first appearance before this Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association was at the Field Day meeting held in Bernardston in 1891, where he spoke for the Bernardston physicians, past and present, as you will find chronicled in the third volume of the Proceedings. In 1928, when he had begun to relinquish somewhat his arduous duties, so that a little time was available, he again spoke informally at the afternoon session of the annual meeting; this time in a reminiscent vein, regretting the passing of the old family doctor, who he felt had gone the way of the street railway and the horse, and he





almost questioned whether so much specialization was contributing to the real best interest of the community. The next year, 1929, he became a member of this association, and so long as health permitted attended the annual meetings, the type of which, with the added social element, was so appealing to him.

On September 5,—nineteen days before his passing,—he and his wife quietly observed their fiftieth wedding anniversary in his sick room at the hospital, where the attendants and many outside friends joined in doing all that could be done, under the circumstances, to make the day memorable, and the occasion brought much joy into those last hard days remaining.

In the experiences of his full life of seventy-five years, even when death claimed his three dear children, his will and faith always won; and those of us remaining, who knew him well, have the example of an indomitable spirit, determined to “carry on.”

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A TRIBUTE TO  
MRS. ELIZABETH H. WELLS  
1845–1938

BY HER SON, JOEL BENJAMIN WELLS

My mother, Elizabeth Hawks Wells, was born December 9th, 1845, in Shelburne, Massachusetts. The house in which she was born was the tavern, post office and community centre presided over by her grandfather, Walter Welles, who was a militia captain, the youngest son of the Revolutionary Colonel, David Welles. She remembered that genial grandfather very well and had some memories of the changing of the mail-stage horses and the stage-coach travel of those times. She also remembered circuses traveling under their own horse and elephant power, when the “Circus Parade” was the arri-



val and departure of the circus. The farm was, of course, one of the old "maintenance farms" where the cattle, hogs, sheep and poultry were the family meat supply, the cows acting as family dairy before they were served on the table, and the fields, orchards and gardens providing the family grains, fruits, vegetables and flax. The hides were tanned on an adjoining farm by Elihu Smead, her other grandfather, who learned his trade under Joseph Stebbins of Deerfield, and the family shoes, harness, etc. were made by itinerant craftsmen or at the Smead farm. So Mother was probably one of the very last survivors among those who had had first-hand experience in taking the food all the way from field, herd or flock to the table, in taking the wool from the sheep's back to the finished suit or blanket, and the flax from the living plant to the finished handkerchief, sheet, fine shirt or embroidered sampler.

She married George Merritt Wells in December, 1872, and came to Deerfield where she lived for sixty-five years and three months, until her death March 17, 1938. My father died in the summer of 1883, less than eleven years after their marriage, but a good deal had happened in that brief time. Five of us had arrived in the home, the old house had burned Easter Sunday morning, 1882, and both Father and Mother had had serious illnesses. As Father's tobacco growing had left him in debt, he had planned to rebuild and start in the dairy business. He died in the midst of carrying out this plan. So Mother was left with the problem of bringing up five small children without means, and we have often marvelled that she succeeded in giving us a really happy childhood under such difficult conditions.

Mother's younger sister, Mary Smead Welles, had come to live with us several years before Father died. She really devoted the rest of her life to us and became a sort of second mother. We all remember "Aunty" with deep affection and Mother often spoke of how much she missed her up to the very last. She died in 1894.





Often during those hard years, my mother turned for help and advice to her cousin, Joseph Wells Stevens, for so many years the honored head of the Greenfield National Bank. He was like a devoted brother to her all his life,—always the very first to appear in times of real trouble, and a true friend to the whole family. And from my father's sister, Mrs. Helen Wells Field of Conway, we ever received sympathy and affectionate help.

Of her many early friends I particularly wish to mention old Dr. Deane of Greenfield. White-bearded, big and hearty, always cordial and friendly, he brought us all into the world and saw us through all the childish diseases, and we had plenty, and devotedly tended Father through his last illness. I remember that he always stayed for a long talk with Mother after he had completed his professional call, but I didn't realize until years afterward what this time meant in the life of a busy doctor and what unmistakable evidence he thus gave that he too, appreciated Mother. Nor can the name of C. Alice Baker be omitted here, since their friendship was one of singular intimacy and mutual regard. Probably it was through her that my mother became so warmly interested in the P.V.M. Association, whose annual meetings she attended up to the last year of her life.

Through all the vicissitudes of her long and arduous life, meeting the stern needs of practical existence in the care and upbringing of her children and facing her problems with unbroken fortitude, my mother was true to the inheritance of the pioneer blood which was her birthright. Death itself had no power to conquer that courage, though three great bereavements were hers in the early loss of my father followed in 1895 by the passing of my youngest sister, Abbie Tyrrel, and in 1905 by that of my eldest sister, Sarah Smead. Deeply as she mourned her dead, she accepted each grief and every deprivation as a burden to be carried without complaint or undue demand on the sympathy of others. Like many of her generation, my mother lived above the trivial mat-





ters of the moment. She drew her active intellectual sustenance from the best books and the best thought of her time, and, never wholly uncritical of her time, she moved abreast of the most liberal forms of thought and read the latest books. Thus companioned by the life of the mind, my mother maintained her interest in the political and religious movements of the world outside her own affairs and did not flinch at changes so long as they consorted with her clear-cut sense of right and wrong. It was to this ultimate bar of righteousness she brought her final judgment.

Hospitality being a marked feature of my mother's nature, she formed many lasting and varied friendships; she loved to gather her neighbors about her table to enjoy the products of what was, with her, the art of cooking; to everyone, who came to her door, she gave a cordial and sympathetic welcome. So her long life, spent chiefly in Deerfield, counted for much to her community, helped make the village doings an influence for betterment in church and school, and offered a notable example of New England character at its best.

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## ALBERT L. WING

BY F. N. THOMPSON

Albert L. Wing of Greenfield was during the years following 1906 a councilor of this association. He was much interested in its proceedings and often spoke during the discussions closing the afternoon meetings. He was born on April fourteenth, 1861, in Ashfield, and at one time worked for George William Curtis, for whom he retained an unbounded admiration and respect. He was proud of his native town and recalled with delight the famous Ashfield dinners to which Mr. Curtis and Charles Eliot Norton brought other literary notables.

Coming to Greenfield, Mr. Wing was employed by



the late Frank Whitney as a carpenter and by the County of Franklin as a turnkey at the jail. Ambitious to better his position, and believing thoroughly in the power and responsibilities of the press, he secured a position as a reporter for the Springfield Republican and covered the whole county. Having an excellent "nose for news" he retained that employment as long as he cared to do so, and then gathered news for the Greenfield Recorder until he was incapacitated by failing health.

Mr. Wing was a student of history, including that of our own region, and a reader of biography. In middle life he married Mabel, daughter of Albert J. Smead, and she survives him. Albert L. Wing, newspaper-man, had a wide acquaintance; and, being of a kindly nature, had many friends. His death, which was preceded by a long illness, occurred soon after our annual meeting of a year ago.

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## NORTHERN NEIGHBORS OF THE POCUMTUCKS

BY JOHN E. GALE

It is now two hundred and seventy years since the whites had any knowledge of the Connecticut valley above Northfield.

In the summer of the year 1669 the colonial government of Massachusetts sent Captain Daniel Gookin, with a few companions, to explore the region to the northward of Squakheag, as Northfield was called by the Indians. Captain Gookin's party went to the northern limit of the land claimed by Nawelet, the chieftain of this tribe. This took them to the stream now called Broad Brook, a considerable mill stream which drains about thirty square miles of Guilford, and flows through Vernon to the Connecticut River about one fourth of a mile south of the Brattleboro town line. The Indian





name for this stream was Wanasquatok, meaning little river.

Captain Gookin's party found wide, fertile meadows on both sides of the river for a great part of the way, and reported favorably for settlement, as the lands were not only fairly smooth and fertile, but there were many valuable nut trees, the chestnut, oak, butternut and hickory comprising a great part of the forestry upon the nearby slopes.

In this vicinity the Indians did not have their dwellings far from the river, and very few of their implements or other relics have been found here excepting near their wigwam sites, tilled fields and fishing places.

The days of Indian occupation here seem so remote, and evidences of their primitive ways and means are so infrequently met with, that our recent generations have given them hardly a passing thought, but Nature herself has forcibly intervened and compelled our renewed interest.

The Connecticut River flood of 1936 so extensively and literally opened up the subject of Indian occupation of lands in and near Northfield, and not only the subject but also the lands themselves, that when arrow-maker's flakes, fragments of Indian pottery and other evidences were discovered in the ruined meadows in that part of Vernon known as the "bow of the river," certain interested residents of the vicinity began a systematic exploration of the wasted tract, and continued their activities until they had searched not only the river banks of Vernon, but also those to the northward for a distance of about twenty miles, incidentally seeking every available source of historical information pertaining to the days of Indian occupation of this region.

About one hundred rods below the great dam at Vernon the Connecticut turns to the eastward and swings farther around until it runs directly north for a short distance, enclosing a peninsula of about seventy-five acres in area. Directly east of the dam the neck of land





is narrowed to a width of only a few rods, or about fifty feet at the top, the banks on both sides being most precipitous. Upon this peninsula, which is practically level, we are told there once stood one of the greatest Indian forts in the Connecticut valley: it enclosed one acre of land about 150 feet above low-water mark. Boulders and tree trunks were placed ready to send crashing down on Mohawks or other enemies who might be trying to scale the steep banks, and there still remain unmistakable evidences of an earth embankment and shallow ditch across the northerly end of the peninsula, for protection against an attack on that side.

As no water supply was available at the immediate site of the fort, a covered path was arranged, and secreted in a small gulch which led southeasterly down toward the river to a cold spring, from which the water still flows, although probably very few people now living ever knew of its existence. The sandy, wooded banks of the gulley have slid in to some extent, and no traces of the old covered path can be found, but the water still flows and finds its way into the old river.

From the site of the fort the river can be seen to the northward as far as Broad Brook, the Squakheag limit, and to the south about the same distance, a mile and a half, to what is left of Pomeroy's Island, so named for one of the whites who was killed there. We are told that this fort was destroyed in 1663 by the Mohawks.

Leaving the fort site, formerly known as Cooper's Point, the river runs east and southeast, then north, its peculiar foldings being such that a straight line drawn from the power house in Vernon into New Hampshire crosses the river three times. Standing upon the neck of the peninsula, facing south, one sees the river wholly upon his right hand: glancing left the river is there, but running north.

He is upon the left bank of the river, and upon both sides of it at once, without moving. Turning east, away from the pastoral scenery of Vernon, one sees but little



save the flowing river, its steep banks a tangle of vines and driftwood, darkened by tall trees, and altogether as weird and strange a prospect as could be found outside the remote primeval forests.

When the river again turns south it soon encounters the Vermont banks at the former landing of the old Stebbins ferry, where may still be seen a part of the logged-up structure which once supported a crude store house.

As the thick ice, riding upon the crest of the great flood of March, 1936, pounded the sandy embankments which had for centuries been a bulwark to the wide "lower meadow" which is some 35 feet above the ancient river level, the dry sand was washed out from under the frozen turf, which fell in great shapeless masses to the bottom of the washout, where the continued action of the flood took out a trench about two thousand feet long and up to 200 feet in width, with varying depths up to 25 or 30 feet, and with two great branches of similar dimensions.

Near the south side of the meadow the water cut through the sandy bank and turned back into the river. This meadow and washout are upon the exact site of the camping place of King Philip, who came here late in February, 1676, and stayed through the month of March. With him came ten tribes of red men from southern New England, including the Narragansets, Naticks, Nashaways, Nonotucks, Agawams, Pocumtucks, Quaboags, Hassanamesetts and Squakheags.

Their total number has been estimated at around three thousand, and this is said to have been the greatest concourse of Indians ever assembled upon the American continent before the Revolution.

No chief but Philip had the generalship and ability to harmonize and unite so large a number of the savages. He was the son of Massasoit, who was the loyal friend of the whites for forty years,—the same Massasoit whose tribe, the Wampanoags, furnished the corn which pre-





served the lives of the Pilgrims during their first winter at Plymouth and gave them seed for planting the following spring, when Massasoit himself paid them a visit; and upon their invitation came again in the fall, after a bountiful harvest, to observe a day of thanksgiving, bringing sixty of his tribe with him for a visit of several days, during which time the red men brought in deer, turkeys and small game sufficient for the entire company.

Massasoit had two sons, Wamsutta and Pometacom, or Metacom, but he wished his sons to have English names, so they were called Alexander and Philip. The old chief never wavered in his friendship for the whites, but during the period of forty years which had elapsed at the time of his death, conditions had changed very greatly. Immigration had brought the whites into New England at the rate of one thousand a year for thirty years, and the chiefs of the small tribes had sold their lands until Philip, who had become chief of the Wampanoags, reluctantly decided that either the whites or the red men must go, so took upon himself the leadership of his people, and in 1675 started the campaign of terror known as King Philip's War, for the prosecution of which he arranged this meeting of the tribes at Vernion in the early spring of 1676. The place chosen was ideal for his purpose: it had been occupied by the red men for a time back of any traditions of theirs. Examination of the banks of the washouts shows that since King Philip's time some great flood has deposited about one foot of soil upon the highest level of the old camp side.

This is evidenced by relics, found there since the flood of 1936, which were found largely on one particular level nearly forty feet above the present level of the river. This camp site was near clean spring water, which has not failed to this day.

Both sides of the river were occupied by Philip's throng, but Philip himself was on the west side. His camp is so located by Mrs. Rowlandson in the narrative



of her captivity. She was the wife of Rev. Joseph Rowlandson of Lancaster, Mass., whose home was burned by the savages in February, 1676, when that town was destroyed and many people killed or taken into captivity, their route being by way of New Hampshire, crossing the river to Philip's camp in what is now Vernon. Mrs. Rowlandson's story says "When I was in the canoe I could not but be amazed at the numerous crew of Pagans that were upon the bank on the other side." Their land was at or very near the old Stebbins ferry location.

Among the most interesting evidences of Indian occupation now remaining here are the grain pits constructed by them for the storage of corn and other food products. Recalling a statement made many years ago by Elijah Belding, of South Vernon, to the effect that there were, on his land near the river, some grain pits which had remained in a fairly good state of preservation since the red men left here nearly 300 years ago, a special trip was made by our explorers, who fortunately succeeded in locating these pits, of which there were two, side by side, rectangular in form, about 8 by 10 feet long, 8 feet wide, two feet apart, and about three feet deep, but being filled with leaves and debris they were not disturbed. Side walls of rough stone had preserved the form and location, which was near the foot of a long, steep, wooded slope covered with trees and but a few rods from the narrow meadow adjoining the west bank of the river, at an elevation sufficient to protect them from floods. This spot is approximately fifty rods north of the Massachusetts line. It is known that there were several other grain pits near by, on the slopes of the present highway, and but a few rods distant.

The little village of South Vernon appears to be on the site of a small Indian village, near the mouth of a stream described in an Indian land deed as Coassuck, now locally known as Dunklee's or Belding's brook, and was the northern limit of the second tract of land sold by the Squakheags to the whites in 1671.





This tract comprised 10,560 acres and extended for six miles on both sides of the river. The remainder of their lands here, a tract twelve miles square, reaching from Coassuck to Wanasquatok was sold to the whites in 1678. It had been customary, when lands were sold to the whites by the Indians, to reserve their hunting privileges, but as this was not done when the Squakheag lands were sold, it was expected that the remainder of their decimated tribe were about to abandon their habitations here, which they soon did, and removed to the westward.

Among the relics recently found at the Vernon camp site are three stone tomahawks, of different patterns and material, and apparently the work of different tribes at widely separated periods of time. The crudity of the first, and the greater depth at which it was found, indicate pre-historic origin.

The second is well finished, and of material and pattern commonly met with about New England. The third is of a dark color, nearly black, and shaped like the usual pattern of the common chopping axe, the stone being flaked and not polished. It is thought that this may be Canadian, as the DeRouvilles with their 342 French and Indians passed this place in February, 1704, when on their way for the destruction of Deerfield, and possibly left a few souvenirs.

Other relics found here are about fifty arrow points of varied styles and materials, spear heads, fragments of Indian pottery showing many different patterns of ornamentation, stone hoes, scrapers, hammer stones, pestles, knives, and sundry other implements of unknown use. Indian bones, scattered by the swift waters, were found here in the washouts, and one whole skeleton at a bank further north.

By the use of small-meshed sieves about 75 small beads and one small cut jewel were found. The beads were of many colors and sizes, but all were small, none



being over one third inch in diameter. It is probable that they were made in Europe and traded to the Indians.

The little yellow jewel has now an enviable place in a pretty gold ring, and is much prized by its present owner. The sieves also brought out of the sand a little porcelain figure of a maiden, with a small dog curled at her feet, and lastly a little piece of hammered native copper shaped to represent that mythical creature, the thunder bird, a subject of veneration and of tradition passed down in all tribes of North American Indians for ages past.

This symbol is found carved in the rocks at the mouth of Wantastiquet, the West River, at Brattleboro, on the medicine tubes found at Swanton, Vt., on the totem poles of Alaska and the Pacific coast to Mexico. A carved "likeness" of this bird caps a two-story totem pole standing in the Peabody Museum at Cambridge, Mass.

One of the copper symbols was also found at Amoskeag Falls, at Manchester, N. H. The Indian regarded the thunder bird as a mascot, a protector, a beneficent presence, at all times to be relied upon as a powerful friend whose symbol was as sacred to the red man as the cross is to the Christian, and considered its possession most valuable for warding off sickness, accidents, enemies, droughts and misfortunes of all kinds. To lose one would be a calamity, and dire trouble might be expected to soon overtake the loser. We see what happened to the Squakheags after theirs was lost—or did Philip lose it?—a few short months before he lost his head. He was killed in August following his stay at Vernon.

But it appears that the thunder bird was something more than a mere tradition which held that there once existed here a great bird which produced lightning by opening and closing its eyes, and thunder by flapping its wings, and had the strength to carry off a man in its talons. We have recently learned that in the great as-





phalt pit at Los Angeles, Cal., among the bones of mammoths, saber-toothed tigers and many other prehistoric animals, there has been found a complete skeleton of a great bird which would have had a spread of fourteen feet. Scientists have given it the name *terraptonis*, or super condor.

Within the past year further verification has been discovered in the sacred bundle of the Gros Venter tribe of Indians in North Dakota, containing two thunder bird skulls, which some wanton member of the tribe had most wrongfully sold into the possession of the Heye Foundation, the Museum of the American Indian, at New York; thereby causing such continued drought and other misfortunes to the Gros Venters that the tribe sent a delegation to Washington, to induce the officials to intercede for its return. This was finally accomplished, and the bundle delivered to the emissaries and returned to North Dakota, when such remarkable rainfall resulted that the lands were flooded to such an extent that the Indians suggested that they be allowed to return the sacred bundle and let the white men control the weather.

Apparently the mixture is not yet quite right to insure complete success.

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## LIVING HISTORY

BY EDWARD E. WHITING

We meet here today to mark the anniversary of a great tragedy; and, which is perhaps more important, to take heart from it, and from what lay behind and before it, to face such perils and such problems as time may have in store for mankind. For we sometimes fall into the easy error of thinking of history as a static thing; some closed chapter to which we can turn in fine sentiment and with due reverence, thus recalling dramatic days that are gone. And when we have done that we are prone to lay the chapter back in the dust whence we took



it for a day, until on some other occasion we are moved once again to disinter it for a moment's observation.

History is not static. It is an unending process. When the victims of the tragedy in those far distant years, whose anniversary we observe today, fell beneath the scourge that overwhelmed them, certainly they had no forevision that long later a group of people, safe and secure amid the protections of another civilization, would turn to their time and their sufferings as one turns to some completed chapter. Those men and women were living their lives, and they died their deaths, all in the plain process of events which they could not exactly foresee and the memories of which they could not foretell. They faced their problems as all ages and all times must face theirs. That they did so in courage and in suffering marks the drama of their memory; but it does not isolate them as actors in a concluded drama. Their tragedy was of long ago; but the significance of their lives and deaths is still vital. Theirs is a living history, as is all history.

Tonight I am going to take you far afield from Old Deerfield, to another part of New England, and I do so designedly, for it seems to me that the true drama of Deerfield is something far wider in scope and meaning than the confined details of this town alone. Year after year you have heard scholarly and thoughtful papers and addresses on the great history of this town; and that is a very fine thing, and it has accumulated a rich store of treasure for posterity to read and note. Tonight, however, I want to offer another picture of that terrible problem and peril that beset the early settlers in our New England, pioneers who were laying the foundations for the nation we know. This lovely land that we know, these beautiful hills and valleys, these flowing streams—all the loveliness that we call New England was won and settled only through trial and stress, with sufferings and tragedies more than enough. It would be a melancholy thing, and it would be a halting and a fu-





tile remembrance if that were all the story. What we must find running through all the adventures and sufferings and heroisms of those distant days is some continuing and constant strain of purposeful strength, something that was destined to mark this land as one of vigor and of the soul's salvation.

As we so approach our task tonight, may I pause a moment from my tale to make reference to the loss this society, all Deerfield and far more have suffered in the passing of our former President, Mrs. Sheldon. It is for us who are left to undertake as best we may to carry on her idea and her purposes, and seek to be worthy in so far as our abilities will permit of the responsibility that has come to us by the loss of her. To her history certainly was ever a living thing. Hers was a mind not only scholarly, hers was not only a discerning love for history and for the memories of great deeds, but it was also and ever the mind of a scientist, to whom there can be no beginnings and no end.

Thus, as I turn now from Deerfield to the part of the country which we shall for a time study—always with its parallel to this town's own history—it seems fitting to me to quote an epitaph which appears on the tombstone of one Thomas Prentiss, or Prentice (both spellings appear) who was a beloved pastor in a part of Kennebunkport, Maine, very many years ago. It is this:

He that is here inter'd needs no versifying,  
A virtuous life will keep the name from dying;  
He'll live though poets cease their scribbling rhyme,  
When that this stone shall mouldered be by time.

All that language can do, whether prose or poetry, is to record what has been, or point to things to come, or express as well as may be lofty sentiments and fine aspirations; but the deeds of men and women, their actions and their faith, these are the living things; and though you dig amid the dust of ages you will but find there the gropings of men's thoughts. And where those thoughts



are high and where they made by them an impress on their own days and nudged civilization a bit forward towards the dim goal of mankind's mysterious purpose on this earth, then doth the memory of them remain, even though their names may be forgotten and their tombstone be mouldered by time. History lives continually, and men and women are but actors who carry onward century by century the destiny of the human race. I could tell you more about Thomas Prentiss, but it has no place here. Sufficient, that he was a good and able man, and that when he passed from this earth there was a current in the progress of the life about him which had taken speed from him, and so, we may believe, is a part of the current of life even now. So it is with all men and women; and so it certainly is with our beloved leader, Mrs. Sheldon.

To understand what made New England, and America, you have to go to the small towns, the villages, rather than to the crowded centers of civilization. There is an intimacy and an individualism in the smaller places which become dulled and lost amid the masses of the cities. To trace the development of the New England spirit and character you must seek out the villages of early days, or of our great cities before they became such. The significances of history are to be found in the regions which were insignificant—which is less a paradox or a contradiction than it appears. Democracy, or what we loosely call so, is the supremacy of the ordinary as distinguished from the dominance of the few.

The little village which provides the material for my paper tonight is down on the coast of Maine: Cape Porpoise. It is now a part of Kennebunkport, but in the days with which I have to deal tonight there was no such place as Kennebunkport. Cape Porpoise was the original settlement—first inhabited in the spring of 1620, before the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock. Those early Maine settlers were fishermen, who built their huts on what is still called Stage Island, fished through the





season, and left their huts in the fall to sail across the seas and again to return, until the time came, not many years later, when they took permanent root.

However, it is not the history of Cape Porpoise that I shall tell you tonight. That is another story. But it so happens that as I spent many weeks digging into that history, in preparation for a book the purpose of which will be to analyze the workings of the minds of our forefathers, seeking thus to trace some meaning of the characteristic behavior of New Englanders and other Americans in these later years, even until now—as I was digging into that early history I came upon many dramatic happenings involving the Indians and the white settlers; and while there is no incident in that history which parallels the story of Deerfield, I believe that some consideration of their problems there fits in with our continuing effort to comprehend all that concerned the tragic days of this old village.

My principal source of information in these matters was an old book published in 1837, the excellent work of one Charles Bradbury, and entitled: "History of Kennebunk Port (two words) from its first discovery by Bartholomew Gosnold, May 14, 1602, to A.D. 1837." This interesting work was prepared and published in accordance with a vote of the town of Kennebunk Port, the selectmen being authorized to subscribe to 500 copies "for distribution among the several families and draw on the treasury for payment." That authorization was of April 13, 1837; thus Mr. Bradbury's book became an official document; also it has become very scarce—a collector's piece. I know of less than half a dozen copies in existence.

Mr. Bradbury did a very thorough piece of work—so thorough that though you may search among original sources for the early history of that town you will find little that he did not find and place in his small volume.

Cape Porpoise knew the terrors and tragedies of Indian warfare; but I call your attention to the interesting



fact that those sufferings in that little village, even as those that came upon Old Deerfield, could not destroy nor stop the determination of our early New England forefathers to settle and use the land, and to lay the foundations for the nation we know.

Due to the Indian turmoil and destruction, an order of the General Court (Maine was then a part of Massachusetts) passed in 1714 stipulated that no town in Maine was to be allowed to be settled without a license from the Governor and the Council, excepting only York, Kittery, Berwick and Wells. Despite that, a number of the people of Cape Porpoise returned to what was left of their village soon after a treaty of peace was ratified and in quite a matter-of-fact way resumed their ordinary work of fishing, farming and milling. Says Williamson's "History of Maine":

"Though Cape Porpoise had never, before its destruction, compared with its neighbors in wealth and population, it had been inhabited by a bold and spirited people; and in 1716 they joined in a prayer to the Legislature for a restoration of town privileges."

Now here, I think, in those few lines by the ancient historian of Maine, lies something vital—one of the life germs that makes history a living thing: For even as those fishermen of Cape Porpoise were "a bold and spirited people" and even as the settlers in this valley were similarly bold and spirited, so down through the avenue of the years runs a boldness and a spirited courage that have made and marked New England among all the regions of the world. It is this boldness, this spirit, that has made us, and by it, and by it alone, shall we be sustained and continued in defense and possession of liberty.

Historians and such societies as this have done much to discover facts and incidents of our early days in New England, and yet there is much mystery about those days. For example, the first item in the story of Cape Porpoise relating to contact with the Indians—the first note of drama in a town that knew much drama—con-





cerns a man known only as "Jenkins from Dorchester." Who he was, remains a mystery, but he enters as the first recorded victim of Indian tragedy. He had come to live in Cape Porpoise (then spelled "Porpus") and one afternoon he went with an Indian deep into the woods, with a store of goods for trading. It is recorded that somewhere on the way he went to sleep in a wigwam of one of Passaconway's men, and that in the night he was killed by an Indian who lived near the Mohawk country, who stole his pack of goods. This Indian was caught and brought back by Passaconway's men; but that is all we know of the mysterious Jenkins of Dorchester and Cape Porpoise. Drama came early to the village.

Now I am to tell of what was probably the most dramatic of the Indian experiences of this little Maine village. It did not have so terrible an ending as the tale of Deerfield's massacre and destruction; but it deserves so much attention as I shall give it here, for once again we find in it that daring and determination and faith and resourcefulness that have been throughout these three centuries the dominant and vital characteristics of New England—the quality that would not let tragedy be the final word, would not retreat, but built onward for all time.

Cape Porpoise is on a bay-indented coast, guarded by reefs like much of that shore. An outer island is called to this day Stage Island, so named from the fact that the fishermen in early days set their fishing stages there, and dried their fish. On that island was the town's first settlement. On it was what is called a fort—a circular affair, not formidable, but affording some protection. At this fort, following the declaration of war between France and England on Dec. 7, 1689, a small garrison of soldiers was stationed under one Lieutenant Puddinton, or Purrington. I find the name spelled both ways in the old records.

Incidentally, it may be of interest to note that to meet the increased expenses of that crisis "Massachusetts is-



sued bills of credit, which was the origin of paper money" in this country—so says Bradbury. Inflation got an early start.

There is some confusion about the commandant at this fort. While he is referred to as Lieutenant Puddington it is more likely that he was one John Purinton, who was then a selectman and the town clerk.

It was a time of fear. The troops left—for what purpose is not clear. It is alleged that they deserted. At all events, the village was left without military protection, and the threat of Indian attack was constant. The townsfolk hastened into the little fort on Stage Island, for what protection it could give, taking with them such ammunition and such food supplies as they could manage to carry thither.

There they were soon besieged by the Indians. There was not sufficient shrubbery to conceal the Indians, and the townsfolk were reasonably secure behind the stone walls of the fort. They were surrounded on three sides by deep water, they being on a point of the island. They had found a refuge; and a trap as well. They could not escape from their fort, had opportunity offered. They had no boat, excepting a frail canoe, one end of which was stove in so that it leaked badly. Even at best it could hold but one person.

The Indians saw their plight, and they waited. Their plan apparently was either to await opportunity for a surprise attack or to starve the townsfolk out. They knew the desperate plight of their victims, and had but to wait.

Picture the condition of these besieged people! They were under constant annoyance from the arrows of the Indians. They saw no chance for escape. Nothing but death, and worse, seemed ahead. There was no chance of aid coming to their rescue. Death or captivity seemed certain.

But there was one rather curious man among them. He was a cripple, named Nicholas Morey. He had suf-





ferred a broken leg which had not mended properly. His name first appears in the town records in 1680. He was a carpenter; and it is probable that he kept a public house at Wells at one time,—where he was complained of in 1682 for selling rum without a license. He moved apparently to Cape Porpoise in 1686, where he also kept a public house for some years.

These particulars about Nicholas Morey, because among them all it was he who saved the day; a crippled, ill-sorted man, little fitted, one might say from what we know of his history, to be a leader or a hero. However, Morey made the suggestion that he should take the broken canoe, and start for Portsmouth for aid. It was a long way to go—for Cape Porpoise is nearly north to Portland. The sea was rough, and his craft was anything but seaworthy. He started out, slipping the canoe into the water noiselessly under cover of the darkness. By sitting up on one end he could keep the broken end out of water so that the craft would keep afloat.

So off went Nicholas Morey, on as remarkable a journey of relief as history is likely to show. Meantime, those confined on the island waited, with such hope as they could muster. Be it noted that there was no talk of surrender, of making any kind of a deal with their enemies. Their food ran out. They had nothing to eat that next day, with Morey on his fantastic journey on the seas. Their bullets they cut into pieces to make them last longer—they came to the last charge for their guns. The Indians, realizing the crisis, though knowing nothing of the Morey venture, intensified their attack. The besieged scanned the sea, throughout that appalling day, in the faint hope that aid might come. Their case was indeed desperate.

Late in the afternoon a watcher saw a speck far on the sea, in the direction of Portsmouth. It was a small sloop. The amazing Morey had either got through to Portsmouth or had met the sloop on the way—the records are



not clear on that point. The general belief is that he paddled all the way to Portsmouth.

The sloop sailed into the island harbor and sent a shot from a small swivel gun at the Indians. It was enough. The Indians fled from the island—which they could easily do from their end of the island, through shallow water at a low tide. The rescued townsfolk were taken off by the vessel.

And so for ten years Cape Porpoise was uninhabited except by such wandering Indians as may have come and camped there. There was no sound but the wash of the tide on the shore, or the rote that thunders over the reefs at mid-tide—the same sound that summer folks listen to in delight in these modern days. The gulls flew and dipped, the terns dove for small fish, and wild life took over all that was left of Cape Porpoise. So for ten years; but then the people came back—even as our forefathers came back here to Deerfield, and built again on the tragic wreckage of what had been.

In 1699 the folks of the town, or some of them, came back. It was their home. They found their houses fallen into ruin. They set to work, repaired the houses, fenced their fields, and put up small mills for their needs. Life was resumed. Soon, however, the Indians, presumably under French leadership, attacked in bands all the chief settlements in Maine, tearing down through the region from Canada.

On August 10, 1703, Cape Porpoise was attacked and destroyed. We spoke of going to the so-called unimportant places, to hear the heart-beat of early America. Well, there is a book titled "Indian Wars" by Penhallow; and of this bloody fate of Cape Porpoise all that Penhallow has to say is this:

"Cape Porpus, being inhabited only by a few unshielded fishermen, was wholly laid desolate."

A grim and abrupt epitaph; but complete.

Nicholas Morey of Stage Island was a humble man;





he did his task, and slips into oblivion. There is no monument to him, so far as we know. Yet it is such as he that have made New England. Let us follow for a few moments the movements of another humble man of that region—Stephen Harding, a blacksmith.

What about Stephen Harding—another unsung hero of those difficult days? His father was Isaac Harding, of whom we find record in the year 1682, when he was “convicted for very disorderly practice, and presumptuously taking upon him the office of a minister, to preach and baptise contrary to rule and His Majesty’s laws here established.” The court declared “against such unwarrantable and presumptuous practices as having no call from God or his people.”

The son Stephen, the blacksmith, was a good natured man, and of powerful physique, as a blacksmith should be. He treated the Indians kindly, and they appear for a time to have left him alone. He was a hunter, and often went in pursuit of game as far as the White Mountains. On a marsh near his home he was accustomed to keep a stack of hay which was so hollowed out as to provide an emergency place of hiding in case of trouble. Oh yes, Stephen Harding got along well with the Indians, but he was a cautious man—as cautious as seemed reasonable.

Harding lived on the west side of the Kennebunk river, and one day hearing firing from the direction of Wells, the next town, he thought it was only the soldiers stationed there. What he did not know was that during that firing 39 of the people of Wells were killed or taken prisoner. The next morning he planned to go hunting. His wife was apprehensive—she said she had seen faces at the window of their house, the night before. So Stephen, waiting for her to cook breakfast, went a little way, to his shop. On the way he saw on Oak’s rocks, at the end of Gooch’s beach—summer people now bathe at Gooch’s beach—a group of men, women and children coming towards his home. He could not understand this,



but he scented danger. He hurried back to the house and told his wife to take their child, aged about one year, and to cross Gooch's creek and to wait for him under a certain oak tree, till he could find out who these strangers were. He still hoped they might be friends, under soldiers' protection.

He crept into his blacksmith shop, and thumped on the wall with his axe, giving an Indian whoop. At once four Indians leaped from a hiding place and rushed towards the shop. They thought it had only the one door, which they could see; and they believed they had their prisoner secure. It was their purpose, presumably, to take him captive to Canada, because of his skill as a blacksmith. The other end of his shop was open, and through this opening he ran, and in a cornfield near his house he found his wife. She had fainted and could run no farther. The Indians were close behind, so Harding picked up his wife under one arm, his baby under the other, and with them he somehow managed to get across the creek at flood tide. There he left them under an oak while he went back to discover if he could what the Indians intended to do. On his way back to reconnoitre he came upon a gigantic bear; and he could not leave his wife exposed to this new danger. They started for Wells—a considerable distance, eating berries on the journey, for they had no food and no way to get any. They reached there, to learn of the killing and captivity of their friends of the few days before.

Now, what did those who knew them and saw much of them think of the Indians? When Bradbury wrote his remarkable book, just over one hundred years ago, there were still a thousand or so of them in that part of Maine. Memories of the terrors and tragedies of earlier days were yet fresh. Yet we find Bradbury, and we find Williamson in his Maine history, presenting a dispassionate and curiously philosophic analysis of their nature and their character. It is so remarkable that we think it distinctly worth quoting here.





"The Indians," says Bradbury, "are tall and straight, with broad faces, black eyes and hair, white teeth, and bright olive complexion. None of them are in any way deformed, or ever grow corpulent. They are extremely fond of ornaments and of bright and dazzling colors." He quotes Williamson as saying this—a singularly balanced presentation:

"Amongst themselves, every right and possession is safe. No locks, no bars, are necessary to guard them. In trade they are fair and honest; astonished at the crimes which white men commit to accumulate property. Their lips utter no falsehood to each other, and the injuries done to an individual they make common cause of resentment. Such is an Indian's hospitality that if an unarmed stranger comes among them and asks protection, he is sure to find it. If cold, he is warmed; if naked, clothed; if hungry, fed with the best the camp affords. They are faithful and ardent in friendship, and grateful for favors, which are never obliterated from their memories. Ordinarily possessing great patience and equanimity of mind, the men bear misfortunes with perfect composure, giving proof of cheerfulness amidst the most untoward incidents, with a glow of ardor for each other's welfare and the good of the country; all offer voluntary services to the public; all burn with the sacred flame of patriotism; and all most heartily celebrate the heroic deeds of their ancestors. The point of honor is everything, in their view. Sensibility in their hearts is a spark which instantly kindles.

"But," continues Williamson, "the darker shades of their character are many. An injury, a taunt, or even neglect, will arouse all the resentments of their untutored minds, and urge them on to acts of fatal revenge. Jealousy, revenge and cruelty are attributes of mind which truly belong to them. If they always remember a favor, they never forget an injury. To suspect the worst—to retaliate evil for evil—to torture a fallen captive—to keep no faith with an enemy—and never to forgive,



seem to be maxims the correctness of which, according to their ethics, admits of no question. 'To them, so sweet in thought and so glorious in fact is successful revenge, that they will go through danger and hardship to the end of life, for the sake of effecting their purpose. No arts, no plans, no means, are left unessayed to beat or kill the object of their hate.'

So wrote Williamson, very many years ago when Indians were real and near, with all their virtues and all their faults. And to all this Bradbury, dating at 1837, adds this interesting comment:

"With these traits of character it would have been easy for the English settlers to have secured their friendship and assistance against the French. They, however, by their wanton insults and cruelty, and constant frauds in their dealings with the Indians, aroused their bad passions against them, and for more than a century were made to feel the effects of their imprudence and injustice. The French early gained the confidence by their kindness and fair dealings, and always found them faithful friends and allies."

As to Williamson's analysis and as to Bradbury's comment, we have nothing to say but to present them as voices from the past—and a past which was almost contemporary with the days of the Indian wars or the fresh memories thereof.

However, lest all this leave us with an excessive admiration for the Indian character and a possibly too severe judgment on the white settlers, let us turn to another brief chapter in those difficult days when the Indian seemed more notable for his darker traits; and to an odd incident of remarkable Christian forbearance.

This occurrence was in October of 1726. Phillip Durrill of Kennebunk went to his work, with a grown-up son, leaving in the house behind him his wife, a 12-year-old son and a married daughter with a 20-month-old infant. Mrs. Durrill had some time before, in 1703, been taken captive by the Indians, and believed that they





would not trouble her again, so little precaution was taken to guard against them. The married daughter's name was Baxter; and she was apprehensive and raised some objections when her father left them unguarded in the house—her husband having gone to the mouth of the Kennebunk river to load some vessels. The men assured her that there was nothing to fear; but she did not feel so.

Events proved that Mrs. Baxter's fears were well grounded. The Indians apparently had been waiting and watching some time for such a chance as this. They had feared to attack when Durrill was at home, for he was a powerful and courageous man. Thus, when the men had left the Indians rushed in, stole all they could carry away and tried, unsuccessfully, to burn the house, piling the chairs in and about the fireplace.

When Durrill returned at night he suspected that something was wrong when his small son did not run to meet him as usual. Discovering how things stood, he gave the alarm and then started with others in pursuit. As the Indians, seeing themselves pursued, fled, they found that Mrs. Durrill was lame and that Mrs. Baxter not being strong could not keep up. They murdered both women. The Baxter child they killed by the ghastly method of taking him by his feet and swinging his head against a tree. Young John Durrill was taken captive, to Canada; and a curious but not unique fact is that when he was returned to his home after two years he ever after appeared more like an Indian than like a white.

So that was the Durrill-Baxter tragedy. Peace between the Indians and the whites came, and in those days an Indian called Wahwa took cruel delight in gloating and boasting to Baxter of the terrible murder of Mrs. Baxter, and of his own share in that horror. One day Wahwa happened to be lying drunk—not an unusual state—by the side of an old well. Beside him stood the stricken Baxter, looking with fixed eyes at him, and thinking such thoughts as we may not know. To Baxter stepped an acquaintance, saw the strange look in his



eyes, and, pointing to the drunken Indian lying by the well's brim, said to him:

"Now is your chance—roll him into the well!"

Baxter turned his face and looked at his friend, shook his head slowly, and walked away, leaving his enemy to sleep off his drunk, unharmed.

Some light may be offered from this additional curious circumstance: When Mrs. Baxter fled she had with her their Bible. The Indians in their flight tossed it away; and in the following spring it was found in the woods, not much worse for the soaking it had had all winter. The leaves were taken out one by one and dried, and then were rebound. It may be even now in possession of some of the Baxter descendants though I can find no trace of it.

And so here, again, we have in a humble and forgotten man, some suggestion of qualities that made New England; and in that spark of grandeur that was in him is something that is an eternal part of history that lives on and on.

As you have followed with me these tracings of the past, in a land which like this beautiful valley knew the terrors and the difficulties of Indian days, we have come upon these items which are all parts of living history, and all marking the character of our New England and our America: Determination against all obstacles, courage of course, resourcefulness, sacrifice, and a Christian spirit under temptation. Let us take one or two more incidents that bring out typical and enduring Yankee traits—these are just brief shots into the past:

In October of 1727 two men from the local garrison—Huff's garrison—named Fitzhenry and Bartow, while on Vaughan's island (which is in Cape Porpoise harbor) for wood, were attacked by Indians, and wounded. Seeking to learn from these men how many were in the garrison, they tortured them; but they stood firm, and, lying in a good cause, told the Indians that the garrison was full, whereas there were actually but seven men





there. They were killed and tossed into a ditch, and "Fitzhenry's ditch" was so known for many a year, and even to this day is referred to. Summer visitors sometimes picnic there, but probably few of them have ever heard the grim tale of their picnic ground.

One day, around about that time, Mr. Huff's daughter was milking when an Indian ran up and caught hold of her. She swung on him with her milk pail, knocked him unconscious, and some of his companions lugged him away. Miss Huff finished her milking.

I have emphasized the importance of the unimportant, in reading and in making living history. Now once again I am turning to the immortal Bradbury, for what seems to me a most enticing bit of philosophy, in his interpretation of the Indians. Says he:

"The savages have but few wants, which are easily supplied; but in a state of civilization many artificial ones are acquired that can only be gratified by continued exertion. Man is naturally an indolent being, averse to labor, and consenting to exert himself only when driven by necessity to supply his absolute wants, or stimulated by his passions. As he advances in civilization his wants increase, and he is emulous to exceed his neighbors in the means of comforts and luxuries. Hence arises the necessity for constant exertion, in order to maintain his place, or to advance himself in society.

"To obtain the means of fancied enjoyment he will, through a long life, sacrifice his ease, forego the comforts within his reach; and brave dangers and hardships that would be insurmountable to the savage. In grasping at the shadow, he will resign the substance; and in endeavoring to better his condition he will lead a life of greater exposure and peril than is incident to the situation from which he is attempting to raise himself. Persons in competence or opulence acquire a taste for parade and show; and they are willing to leave a comfortable home and a loving and beloved circle of friends,



and in distant and foreign climes, brave poverty, dangers and even death itself, in the hope of obtaining the means of continuing or adding to their enjoyments.

“This desire of self-aggrandizement—this restlessness of disposition, which prevents so many from remaining contentedly in that happy state of mediocrity, alike free from the vexations of wealth and the miseries of poverty—this wish to accumulate property beyond the capacity of enjoyment, although in itself an undesirable state of individual feeling, yet, in the aggregate, has undoubtedly been the means of advancing not only wealth and knowledge but even of promoting happiness itself in the world at large.”

Thoughts of a century ago! Do they not tell the story of New England—that restless, eager, unconquerable determination to go onward, to stop at no obstacle, to know no discouragement, to relinquish ease and security—to abandon the “happy state of mediocrity” and to build villages and towns and cities? So was Deerfield made, and so were great metropolises. The same living history of America is in them all.

A century ago my author, Bradbury, caught the truth in his philosophizing on the contrast between the way of the savage and the way of the white man. One more paragraph from him:

“From this class was our own happy and flourishing state colonized; and by them are our new states and settlements peopled; our ships, seeking wealth in every part of the globe, manned; the bowels of the earth and the dense forests ransacked, to obtain that rank in society that wealth always gives; and our country raised to its present elevated stand among the nations of the earth.”

Thus a century ago. Thus today. Thus a century hence. It is our blessing and our boast that ours has from the beginning been a land of ideals and a land of courage. Errors we have committed; injustices, crimes, pain and poverty have had their pitiful share in the running





history of the years, but by and large there have, we believe, ever been principles ahead of policies and a continuing pursuit of the goal of a better civilization.

Those courageous men and women who peopled and guarded the frontiers, and sometimes left their blood upon them in the tragedies of war and sorrow—these men and women, whether in the Deerfield valley or on the coast of Maine, or elsewhere in the broad march of civilization, have had in their minds something more than selfish aggrandizement. They carried banners of civilization, banners of liberty and the rights of the individual.

So runs the backward look in our history—a history that cannot be regarded as a closed chapter, an old tale to be picked up and read and tossed away again, but a history that lives from century to century and from day to day. It is a far leap back to the days of the Indian wars—yet in essentials they are close to us, always.

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## PINE HILL—A PLACE APART

BY F. N. THOMPSON

Oh, mystical island of murmuring trees;  
The green fields about are your embracing seas,  
Save when those broad meadows, once home of the deer,  
Are flooded by tides of an oncoming year.  
Why murmur, or question what all perfect seems?  
The present is lovely: Of what are your dreams?

“Oh, mystical island”! How removed you seem, though so close to the village of Old Deerfield. Your murmuring silence is remote from the work-a-day world; as your wild, wooded plateau is lifted above the cultivated fields about. You seem further away in time than in space, for your associations are with the past.

We know that the red men drank at your springs; kept clear by burning “those broad meadows, once home of the deer,” and planted in the deep, dark soil their maize; doubtless fertilizing each hill, in the manner



which "Squanto" taught to the Plymouth Pilgrims, with fish taken from those running up the river to spawn.

Recorded time in our valley is very brief, and it was soon after the dawn of local history that the Mohawk "prince" Sahedra was basely slain by Pocumtuck Indians and the powerful Mohawk warriors came in their wrath and drenched with blood of the Pocumtucks the broad expanse of North Meadow.

It was here, within sight of Pine Hill, that our valley was thus cleared for an English plantation; it was on the other, larger, plateau near by that the settler built his home; and it was in one of their surrounding fields that Samuel Hinsdell turned the first furrow and made the place no longer red Pocumtuck but white Deerfield.

When the tide of civilization had temporarily receded and the Indian again planted here his maize, it was on Pine Hill that he made his camp. Mr. Sheldon wrote of the red men retiring with their plunder to this hill after an attack upon Deerfield September twelfth, 1675. When those brave settlers, in the spring of 1676, marched by, at dead of night, on their way to attack the great band of natives at the fishing falls near the mouth of Fall River, it was from Pine Hill that torches flashed forth to put in fear of discovery those 140 men who were hazarding, upon the success or failure of a surprise attack on the savages, their lives and their homes.

Pine Hill saw in 1704 the sad processional of the captives driven toward cold Canada; and that fatal Meadow Fight was within her view. Yes, she witnessed the preparation and the possession; and she saw the red and white tides ebb and flow, as she has seen blue waters flood the meadows and give place to green and growing fields.

All sunlit at morning you stand, freshly gowned;  
Majestic and distant; by Nature tree-crowned:  
You're always communing with her, or the Past:  
Pine Hill, it is Dreamland where your shadow's cast.  
Thou isolate island, of whispering trees  
Tho meadows about you be stirred by no breeze.





"All sunlit at morning" Pine Hill lifts above the steaming meadows as we look westward from the highway. Its isolation is notable. Mr. Sheldon says that the name "Pine Hill" was used as early as 1671, and that it is about forty feet high and covers thirty acres. The maps of the U.S. Geological Survey for Old Hampshire mark the high and narrow western plateau "lake bottom," and the lower and wider level table-land on the eastern part is marked "highest normal terrace of erosion" as is also the plateau on which the village of Old Deerfield is located. The high westerly bank runs very steeply down to "Long Pond" (which is evidently an old river bed), and in other places to the meadow. Toward its northern end this upper level is most narrow and is twice interrupted by valleys which cross it east and west at nearly the level of the lower and principal eastern terrace.

The east bank of the upper terrace is less steep than the western: but there are no gradual slopes, the two terraces being extremely level and all banks more or less steep. At one point on the high western side the underlying red sandstone is exposed, and this ledge has also been bared where the hillside at its south end has been dug away near a great elm which stands on the level of the meadow.

Long Pond lies westerly of the hill; Round Pond southerly of that; and another pond—for which Mr. Ashley, who owns land about it, has no name—may be the one which has been referred to as "Pine Hill Pond." Apparently the hill was for a time an island in the waters whose bottom was the present meadow. In recent times a southerly elbow of the Deerfield river kept cutting closer and closer to the northeastern bank of Pine Hill, but at the same time the peninsula within the elbow was constantly narrowing at a place some rods northerly of the hill: so finally, not many years ago, that peninsula became an island. Not long afterward the old



channel became an isolated ox bow, and the Deerfield river no longer threatens Pine Hill.

The strange plateau, with another narrow plateau superimposed upon its western side, reveals, records and retains the one-time level of an ancient lake; and the secret of its preservation, when the waters subsided and the stream found a lower level, probably lies in the sandstone foundation of its western face.

On a Sunday afternoon (April 11, 1937) John Ashley and I spent two hours exploring Pine Hill, and as we walked through the woods on the upper terrace I noted black, white and a few gray, birches; white oak and red; sugar and soft maples and toward the northern end a number of striped maples or moosewood. There were hickory, and I think ash; some sassafras and a few hornbeam (ironwood or blue beech). On the precipitous western slope I saw several good beech trees, and along the northern edge of the plateaux were a few large hemlocks and white pines. As we returned we passed through Judge Ball's open woods, which contained many good trees of average size and considerable height, though the chestnut trees and most of the tall white pines have gone.

Later in the season vegetation is further advanced and the floor of the forest bears the wild plants which add so much to the beauty of Nature's great garden. In such a secluded spot a poet should dwell. Nature and Poetry find all things possible; and left to themselves they make each picture perfect and complete, place a gem in each suitable setting: so to Pine Hill was sent a poet. Of the hill its poet wrote:

Here Nature has a garden;  
By her alone 'twas planned,  
Though wanton seems her sowing,  
She makes her garden grand.

When seeds she has been strewing  
Are scattered o'er the hill,  
She leaves them there to blossom  
And tangle as they will.





Here twining, gnarled, wild beauty  
Is kindred to the place.  
By frost and snow not hidden,  
But lent an added grace.

When the meadows were a cold white plain and the trees of Pine Hill were given added grace and beauty by a mantle of snow, my wife and I once explored the hill on snow-shoes and came upon a small black-eyed man dragging a tree to his cottage, that he might with axe and flame release its stored sunshine to turn away the winter's cold.

With head cocked on one side, he stood there in the snow amid the branches, and recited to us his pretty poem on the chickadee—a brave little bright-eyed black-capped chickadee himself, though disguised by a covering other than feathers. The incident made the "Dream-land" harmonious in all its parts, and our trip became one of those delightful memories too delicate to seem real, but too satisfactory to disbelieve.

Do you dream of the maize once laid on your breast  
By red-men who made here their camp and had rest?  
Or remember a day when the settlers passed near,  
The time Moses Chandler was ferryman here?  
How Agassiz came here; and Hitchcock was off;  
And, latest, the hermit established hiscroft?

The "red-men who made here their camp" left their "barns," as the settlers called them. Mr. Sheldon says of these "excavations in the earth for storing provisions": "My attention was called by Mrs. Nancy Campbell to certain 'Indian Lookouts' on Pine Hill. These proved to be barns of considerable size." And of Indian graneries elsewhere he says: "Those examined were about four and a half feet deep. One was found to have been lined with clay." I had the pleasure of pointing out one on Pine Hill to its present owner.

After the red man and his trails, came the white man and his roads. The road from Deerfield toward the north passed by the side of Pine Hill and came to the ferry by



which one crossed to the "Green river lands," and "Moses Chandler was ferryman here." This must have been the hill's period of greatest publicity. The ferry was close to the future metropolis of this region: The confluence of streams has ever been the place near which gregarious men have built their hives of industry, and Cheapside was no exception to this rule. It was once the commercial centre of northern Hampshire, and in 1811 it nearly became the seat of government of the new County of Franklin.

Reverend Doctor Amariah Chandler, of whose life and time my father has spoken to this association, was a son of the ferryman, and in the vivacious diary of his wife—written on the doctor's sermon-paper by my mother's Aunt Mary—I have read of their driving to "Carter's land" near this ferry. "Agassiz came here, and Hitchcock": The great Agassiz was interested in Pine Hill's curious formation, and on the Albany road in Old Deerfield was the home of the famous Hitchcocks. Edward Hitchcock (1793-1864) was state geologist of Massachusetts. The ferryman and the ferry, the old road and "horse and buggy days" have all gone. The hermit-poet whom most of us remember was the last person to live on Pine Hill.

Recall how the preacher came back here, to die,  
And all of that kindred secluded now lie  
Where a white marble rests 'gainst a white birch tree?  
(Life that was; life that is and the Life to be.)  
By their lilac-drest mounds the wood-zephyr roams,  
And by long-sunken graves of their one-time homes.

Conspicuous from the north end of "the town street" of Old Deerfield is that tall "white birch tree," spared when others on the southerly part of Pine Hill were cut down. Against this tree there used to lean a white marble slab marked "1840 THE FAMILY BURIAL PLACE OF RODOLPHUS DICKINSON." When I first saw this spot the mossy mounds beneath the trees were otherwise unmarked. Not far away, on lower





ground and near a lane cut through the south-easterly bank of the hill, remains a cellar hole which reveals the site of the Dickinson house, built by the preacher's own hands.

Rodolphus Dickinson was a graduate of Yale College, a lawyer and the first clerk of the courts in this county (1811 to 1819). He became an Episcopal clergyman and had parishes in South Carolina.\* He published in 1833 "A new and corrected version of the New Testament" which demonstrated his erudition. One sentence in its preface—meticulously divided by colons, semicolons, commas and a dash or two—covers a page and a half! Under "Apostolic Productions—Matthew's History" occur the words: "Jesus took occasion to say, I entirely concur with thee, O Father."

I have a copy of this remarkable book, which was given me by the widow of my friend John D. Bouker, once register of deeds. It is bound in red leather, and stamped in gold upon its cover is the name FELICIA ANN DICKINSON. The poet of the hill told me that it had belonged to his mother Nancy Dickinson Campbell, whom her father called Felicia because of her happy disposition.

"The preacher came back here to die" in the seclusion of this wooded hill, his brilliant but eccentric mind having weakened before its body. In his "family burial place" lie "A REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIER THOMAS W. DICKINSON 1751-1835" "HIS WIFE THANKFUL FIELD 1758-1836" (Their son) "RODOLPHUS W. DICKINSON 1786-1862" "HIS WIFE NANCY HOYT 1788-1870" (Their daughter) "NANCY H. DICKINSON 1815-1895" (Her husband) "JOHN CAMPBELL" (and their son) "RODOLPHUS CAMPBELL 1848-1931."

Doubtless the Campbells were of Scotch ancestry; for Rodolphus, discovering a thistle to be sharing with him

\* See also P.V.M.A., II, 292, and III, 79.



the wooded hill, warmly welcomed the thorny weed in these words:

I would know how long you've been hidden;  
What caused you to pause on your way;  
Did you think, because I'm a Campbell,  
That you would hear the bagpipes play?

I would know from whence you were driven;  
Have heard you were under a ban;  
Did you think it safe to hide you here  
Because I'm of the Campbell clan?

You will have no use for your armor,  
You'll never be tread on by me.  
I ought to don the kilt, or the plaid,  
And do honor to such as thee.

Rodolphus' father, John M. Campbell, served for Deerfield in the Civil War, and I recall my visits to the home at the north end of Pine Hill about 45 years ago to make out pension papers for Mrs. Campbell, a pleasing little old lady who wrote the clear Spencerian hand of her remote schooldays. After she died I attended there a function more sorrowful than many a funeral. Those of you who were there will remember the auction of furnishings of that home. Mrs. John Sheldon bought there the beautiful hall clock which she presented to her sister and I bid in for my mother's sister a little oval tip-top stand.

From that time Rodolphus Dickinson Campbell lived alone on Pine Hill and seemed a part of his surroundings. After his death, and an interment in "the family burial place," the granite markers whose inscriptions I have quoted were placed by the friends who had brought comfort to his waning days. On these the name of that "(THOM)AS WELLS DICKINSON" who "DIED JAN 16 1849 AE 65" does not appear, but I deciphered that inscription on fragments of marble headstones which I found about the Campbell home-site. Other broken stones there were those of Col.





Thomas W. and Thankful D., the parents of this Thomas Wells Dickinson and his brother Reverend Rodolphus. Sheldon's Genealogy indicates that Thomas, junior, had a wife and children.

Beneath the trees on silent, secluded Pine Hill are these graves by the white birch tree, the Dickinson cellar and the bed of once-cultivated lilies growing near by: and at the opposite end of the plateau remain but the broken bits of marble and the cellar hole marking the place where the gentle poet dwelt among other children of Nature and noted growth and decay—gay woodbine and dying tree—saying to the vine:

Like emblems of love, your tendrils are growing,  
Are twining still closer by night and by day;  
And though it is doomed, your staff soon must crumble,  
You're weaving a mantle to hide its decay.

When years shall have passed, your staff it has fallen,  
Though now you're aspiring, then humble you'll be;  
And should it be autumn when I am passing,  
A gorgeous draped mantle is all I shall see.

But few see today the "twining, gnarled, wild beauty" which "is kindred to the place" where "Nature has a garden" in which she is "weaving a mantle to hide its decay." There are no signs of human life on the hill now, save the memorials of lives which have passed from it.

This "island of whispering trees" is shared by the spirits of those who here lived and loved, their ancient lilies, the seedlings of trees which shaded them and wild plants they knew, and by descendants of the squirrels and woodchucks, wood thrushes and chickadees, of their earthly days. Pine Hill, you are a place apart!

When lingering day at last comes to die,  
Your treetops are towers against flaming sky;  
When the sun thro the branches no longer is bright,  
In a beam of the moon that birch-tree shows, white;  
While all thro the meadows there moves the night breeze,  
Caressing you, Island of whispering trees.



## OFFICERS FOR 1939

*President*, Francis Nims Thompson, Greenfield.

*Vice Presidents*, Hazel Sheldon Nichols and Edward E. Whiting.

*Recording Secretary*, Margaret Harris Allen.

*Treasurer*, W. Herbert Nichols, Greenfield.

*Council*, the above officers and the following:

Jonathan P. Ashley, Ernest E. Coffin, Mary W. Fuller and Margaret C. Whiting for the term expiring 1940; Frank L. Boyden, Minnie Ellen Hawks, Margaret Miller and Jane Atherton Wright till 1941; Helen C. Boyden, John W. Heselton, Lucy Cutler Kellogg and Agnes P. Sheldon till 1942.

## TRUSTEES

*George Sheldon Memorial Fund*: Trustees; Agnes P. Sheldon, 1940; W. Herbert Nichols, 1941; Frank L. Boyden, 1942.

*Sheldon Publishing Fund*: Margaret C. Whiting, 1940; Hazel Sheldon Nichols, 1941; Jonathan P. Ashley, 1942.

*Old Indian House Homestead*: William L. Harris, 1940; Margaret Harris Allen, 1942; W. Herbert Nichols, 1946.

*Charlotte Alice Baker Fund*: Helen C. Boyden, Margaret Harris Allen, W. Herbert Nichols, "Curators of the Frary House Estate."

## COMMITTEES

*Executive Committee*: President, Treasurer and Frank L. Boyden.

*Finance Committee*: Hazel S. Nichols, F. N. Thompson and John W. Heselton.

*Meeting and Program*: Frank L. Boyden, Mary A. Ball and Jane A. Wright.

*Auditors*: Carlos Allen and John W. Heselton.





# POCUMTUCK VALLEY MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

## REPORT

This is the second of the "annuals" which will constitute Volume IX of our "History and Proceedings." It contains original matter edited and published in a limited edition under a vote by the corporation.

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Our first "annual" was cordially received by members of the P.V.M.A. and by a public interested in the Old Deerfield region: it is hoped that this will be equally acceptable.

Respectfully submitted,

FRANCIS NIMS THOMPSON, *President*;  
W. HERBERT NICHOLS, *Treasurer*.

Memorial Hall,  
Deerfield, Mass.



## SEVENTIETH ANNUAL MEETING—1940

*In the Council Room* at Memorial Hall, on the afternoon of February 27, the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association held its annual meeting. The records of the 1939 meeting were read and approved and all *officers and councilors reelected*.<sup>\*</sup> Mrs. Wright presented a *tribute* to Miss N. Theresa Mellen and the president made his *annual report*.

Mr. Ashley's paper on his Old World pasture was well read by Miss Minnie Ellen Hawks; our president spoke briefly of Joseph Baldwin, a forgotten ancestor of many Deerfield families; Mrs. Kellogg told of the odd names of local places; Miss Whiting gave a charming account of a Deerfield episode; and Judge Thompson read a short account of Dr. Charles Knowlton of Ashfield, whose writings greatly reduced the birth rate in England a century ago.

The day was fine, the meeting well attended and the papers appreciatively received. The audience lingered for general discussion and friendly visiting which was later resumed at the town hall.

*The Council meeting*, following that of the corporation, heard and approved the record of its 1939 meeting, and made *appointments*.<sup>\*</sup> *Financial reports* by the treasurer and the five boards of trustees<sup>\*</sup> were also approved. Mrs. Allen reported for the Curators of the Frary House Estate, that matter was discussed at some length and a joint meeting of the Curators with the Executive Committee was agreed upon. The auditors' report was accepted and referred to the Executive Committee for any necessary action as to methods of accounting.

*In the town hall* the women of Deerfield, under the able leadership of Mrs. Henry C. Wells, furnished a capacity supper to an almost capacity gathering; and

<sup>\*</sup> Listed on page 137.





Ralph H. Oatley led the Glee Club of Deerfield Academy in a series of delightful songs. The P.V.M.A. is most grateful.

*The evening papers* were heard by a large and appreciative audience. Miss Harriet E. Childs read "Frery House—1685," an interesting and informing paper by Miss Emma L. Coleman of Boston who long lived in the fine old house which Miss C. Alice Baker devised to the Memorial Association; Professor Burnett, of the academy's department of geology, spoke with clarity and humor of the pre-history of the Deerfield valley; and Mr. Severance, of the Greenfield Recorder-Gazette, gave a graphic picture of the devastation wrought by the hurricane-flood of 1938, including detailed data which make his paper a valuable record of that historic event. The meeting adjourned soon after nine o'clock.

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## REPORT BY THE PRESIDENT

Your executive committee has little unusual to report as to 1939 except that we have acquired the occupancy of Frery House in addition to the legal title which came to us at the death of C. Alice Baker. This property is in charge of the "Curators of the Frery House Estate," who also act as trustees of the \$1,000 fund for its maintenance, and on those subjects they will report.

By Miss Baker's will she provided that at Frery House "admission fees shall be the same as at Memorial Hall" while fees are charged at the hall. Fees of 25¢ for adults and 10¢ for children have been collected at the hall this summer, and the hall has been open five Sunday afternoons. With both buildings open this coming season, we will be able to determine if these are the proper charges.

Being somewhat fearful of the total expense of insurance and repairs on Frery House—including those of preparing the south part of the ground floor for occu-



pany this coming spring "by a spinster, or widow without young children, who shall be the caretaker"—we postponed publication of Vol. VIII of our "Proceedings." It was made ready in the spring of 1938 for printing, and your committee feels that it must be published this year, though these publications cost us double the prices at which they are sold.

Three months after our 1939 meeting, Mrs. Sheldon's faithful co-worker, Miss Mellen, ended her labors. I spoke a year ago of the excellence of her service, and soon Mrs. Wright will read a tribute to her memory. We made no permanent appointment of a Keeper of the Sheldon Collection, but employed the Misses Hartwell of Greenfield and Mrs. and Miss Biddle of Deerfield when they were free from other duties. Your executive committee will appoint a Keeper and the Frary House curators will appoint a Caretaker for the coming year.

Mrs. Biddle reports that people from 39 different states and the District of Columbia, and from nine foreign countries including Australia and Japan, have visited Memorial Hall. The receipts from admissions amounted to \$600.80. We have been presented with a beautiful pewter communion set, displayed in a glass case, from the old church in Hawley. Thirty-five books and pamphlets are among the other contributions. We would be glad to receive more fine old china for the shelves of the Hackley cupboard.

Income from the George Sheldon Memorial Fund, received a year ago, has made it financially possible for us to carry on during days of reduced returns; but most welcome to the P.V.M.A. would be an endowment for maintenance of Frary House. This and the publication of original manuscripts are two important departments of our work; and with each of them adequately financed, Memorial Hall and its Sheldon Collection could be more readily cared for and exhibited.

Our seventy-year-old association owes everything to the Sheldons and those other faithful friends who have





during the generations contributed thought, time and money. I wish that your president of today might somewhat approximate Mrs. Sheldon's generous contribution of constant attention. That has been impossible, especially during the last few months, but you may be encouraged to hear that he has already been promised two of the papers for the 1941 meeting.

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## A TRIBUTE TO MISS MELLEN

BY JANE ATHERTON WRIGHT

Nettie Theresa Mellen was born in Redding, Connecticut, in 1869, the daughter of James and Emaline Whitehouse Mellen. The father of James Mellen had emigrated to this country from Scotland when a boy and the parents of Mrs. Mellen were born in England. From Connecticut James Mellen turned his way northward and while his three children were young bought a large farm in South Hadley, about a mile from Mount Holyoke College. Here Miss Mellen and her brother and sister spent a happy childhood, and here she found her love of nature which was intensified with the passing years.

She was an omnivorous reader and preferred staying at home with her books to joining in the social activities of the country community in which she lived. She displayed such marked ability as a student in her grade work that she was sent to Springfield to live with an uncle, that she might enjoy the advantages of the Springfield high school instead of attending that in South Hadley. From this school she graduated with high honors and then entered the Westfield Normal School, at that time under the presidency of James C. Greenough, to prepare for her chosen work as a teacher.

It was here that I first met her and admired and respected her scholarship, for she was an outstanding figure in any class of which she was a member. On account



of her reserve I knew her very slightly, and it was only when we were thrown together again the following year in Montague City, where she had secured a position as teacher after graduating from Westfield Normal School, that I came to know her better. I was living there with my parents and, as she was boarding near by, I began to invite her to our home, first from a sense of duty and then, as I penetrated the crust of that reserve, from a great joy in her companionship.

We had two big things in common—love of books and love of nature. We read together and roamed the fields, finding new specimens of wild flowers; and thus was laid the foundation of what proved to be a life-long friendship. After that year our paths diverged, as she was called to teach first at Needham and then at Hyde Park, now a part of greater Boston. She was very successful in her work as a teacher, but her heart was never in it as she was always longing for the flowery meadows, the wooded hills and babbling streams of her beloved New England.

However, with characteristic thoroughness, she took advantage of the many opportunities open to her as a city dweller, one of which was to obtain a degree from the Institute of Technology in Boston for an extension course for teachers in mineralogy and geology. She was a great lover of the best music and was able to attend the concerts of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and to hear in Grand Opera the great figures of that day, Nordica, Melba, Calvé and the De Reszkés.

She also enjoyed to the full the great actors and actresses then playing at the Boston theatres. Among her books was a theatre record, and here were the names of Rehan, Irving, Terry, Sothorn, Marlowe, Mansfield, Crane, Mrs. Fiske and many others; each page containing pictures of the artist, the date, her criticism of the performance etc., all written in the old-fashioned Spencerian hand, so clear that he who runs may read.

After several years of city life she resigned her posi-





tion in Hyde Park on account of the ill health of her mother, returned to South Hadley and started in the poultry business on her father's farm. She enjoyed this outdoor country life exceedingly until, after a few years, her mother became very ill and passed away. Miss Mellen continued to carry on her poultry business until her father's second marriage, when it seemed advisable to find other occupation.

She hesitated to return to teaching, as she much preferred the country life to which she had again become accustomed. Until some satisfactory solution of the problem could be found, I invited her to come to our home and assist me in the cares of the household and of three lively children. This she did, and during this time I happened to be chatting with Mrs. Sheldon one day and she told me of some difficulty she was having in finding enough people to read to Mr. Sheldon. I told her that I had a friend staying with me who read aloud well and who enjoyed it. She thanked me and said she would bear it in mind, and it was not long after that she called me up and asked if that friend was still with me and, if so, to have her come down that evening.

Mr. Sheldon was delighted with her reading and from that time she became one of his regular readers, going down two or three times a week to read aloud to him. This had been going on for about three months when Miss Mellen brought me the message that Mr. Sheldon wished to see me about something. When I arrived, and after the usual greetings, he said with characteristic frankness, "Mrs. Wright, you have something that I want, and I have sent for you to talk it over." I couldn't imagine what he meant, and then he explained that it was Miss Mellen and that he wanted her for the position of assistant curator at Memorial Hall, that she possessed just the desirable qualifications for carrying on that work; but that he didn't want any hard feelings, so had said nothing about it to her until he could talk with me. I told him that Miss Mellen was looking for work that



would be in keeping with her ability and training, but that as part of the remuneration was the rent of Red Cottage I didn't see just how it could be managed. However, I went home and told Miss Mellen about it and in the end it was arranged.

She owned a chamber set and stove; and a few things from Mrs. Sheldon's attic and ours, together with a shower of kitchen utensils and dishes given by a group of friends to properly celebrate the approaching union of Miss Nettie Mellen and Mr. Memorial Hall, started her out in her new abode, from whence she served the P.V.M.A. for 26 years, losing in that time only a half day on account of illness. She brought to her new task all the fidelity, scrupulous honesty, nicety of detail and high standard of attainment which had characterized her work as a teacher, and in addition she loved her work and she loved Deerfield. She had the greatest respect and admiration for the residents of Deerfield and always believed them to be a vastly superior group of people.

To satisfy her sense of beauty she immediately began putting in shrubs, perennials and climbing vines; not only around Red Cottage and its boundary lines, but also along the east end of Memorial Hall there began to appear a gay procession of summer flowers. Lilacs, forsythia, spirea, bright beds of iris, tulips and peonies were planted; and over the one-time bare piazza facing the western hills climbed honeysuckle and rambler roses. Back of the cottage every inch of land was utilized, not only by all kinds of annuals and perennials, but also, until the putting through of the state road took off a goodly share of the back yard, by a well stocked vegetable garden. This gave her three full-sized jobs, and for each she demanded of herself perfection—or as near perfection as was humanly attainable.

That she might keep her little home beautiful with the beauty that comes of spotless cleanliness and perfect order she arose at five, and by the time her duties at Memorial Hall began, her washing, ironing, cleaning and





cooking were out of the way and everything about her shining and immaculate. Then as soon as her duties at the hall were over at night and a hasty supper partaken of, she was free to labor in her beloved garden, weeding, transplanting, planning for fresh beauties, until driven in by the gathering shadows.

For years it was her habit on Sunday afternoons to roam the hills for flowers in their season. It was she who always brought home the first pussy willows in the spring, who knew where the first hepaticas and may-flowers could be found, and who wound up the season by gathering sprays of bittersweet and masses of witch-hazel.

For many years she devoted one evening in each week to reading aloud to Mrs. Sheldon, and together they enjoyed the best articles in the current *Atlantic Monthly*, the best of recent fiction, and more solid food from books concerning subjects dear to Mrs. Sheldon's heart. Among Miss Mellen's treasures I found a pencilled note from which I quote: "My dear Friend—I do not know of any remembrance of our delightful evenings together that I would rather give you than this little watch. May you hear it ticking of our friendship many years to come. Yours as ever, Jennie Arms Sheldon."

Miss Mellen resigned from her work on Saturday, May 26, and passed on peacefully on June 4, 1939. Emerson has said: "When we look at ourselves in the light of the past, we see that our lives are embosomed in Beauty." Truly her life was ever embosomed in beauty—the beauty of flowers and music and of humble labors lovingly performed. I like to think that it may be said of her: "Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things."



## FRARY HOUSE—1685

BY EMMA L. COLEMAN

"Frary House" is the oldest house in the County of Franklin. With the home of Samuel Carter, now the ell of "The Manse," it is all that is left of seventeenth century buildings in the village of Old Deerfield.\* It has had many owners; notably Samson Frary who built it, Salah Barnard who enlarged it and C. Alice Baker who saved it from destruction. It was owned by a Frary until 1752. In 1890 Miss Baker, seventh in descent from the builder, gave the house the name it now bears.

It was well built, as is shown by the massive chimney-stack set upon great field-stones laid in clay, the generous hearthstone of the kitchen, the axe-hewn timbers, the heavy oak posts and the good lines of the roof. Samson Frary built in perilous days, when "there was neither time for anything non-essential, nor place for anything flimsy and impermanent." He would know the house if he came back, for the lines of the original house are unchanged: if he entered he would see such changes as Miss Baker found essential to comfortable living, and the suitable furnishings of her home.

## THE FRARYS

Who was Samson Frary and how did he happen to make his home in the beautiful valley? He was the son of John and Prudence, who were very early settlers in Dedham, where John was one of the "8 p'sons . . . sett a part by ye lord" to enter "into sollem'e covenant with ye lord & one another" in founding the church in 1638.

Our forebears, like their descendants, were restless

\* Miss Margaret Miller, long resident in the John Nims house, believes its eastern end to have existed before 1700, and it seems probable that one of its two chimneys with ovens served the Godfrey Nims house which burned in 1694. Editor.





folk, always seeking new lands, always pushing on. Only five years after the settlement of Watertown, its people, afraid of being "ruinated" by too many inhabitants, asked the General Court to permit some of them to take up grants higher up the river, and so Dedham was begun.

But the Dedham people, feeling "streighend at their doores by other tounes & rocky lands" asked for "a parcell of upland & meadow." That was given, and a distinct village, still within the grant, became Medfield. To Medfield went John Frary, and there his son Samson married Mary, daughter of Robert Daniel of Watertown and Cambridge.

But restlessly Samson pushed on. He, his wife and their two little girls, four and six years of age, went to Hadley, where in that part which became Hatfield, Eleazer Frary was living. The difficult journey must have been made by the narrow Bay Path until, at Brookfield, they turned toward the northwest. The Frarys did not long tarry there. Poor Mary! Let us hope that she shared her husband's eager spirit of adventure, for that soon carried them higher up the valley to Pocumtuck, which in 1674 became Deerfield.

The Inhabitants of Dedham were the "Proprietors of the 8,000 acres at Pocumtuck" and when "an Artiste" engaged upon "as moderat tearmes as might be to laye out the Lotts" came with the Dedham committee, he found that two men, impatient of delay, were already making homes there. Robert Hinsdell had plowed, and at the north end of what became "the town street" Frary had dug "a celer."

In the primitive dwelling built upon that cellar,\* the Frary family must have lived, more or less uncomfortably, until the tragedy of Bloody Brook drove all the people to the towns below. When Philip's War was over

\* The "banke or falling ridge of land at Samson Frary's celer"—perhaps the "celar" was but "a sort of a house" where "he dug a hole in the sid Hill" like that described in "An Old Scrap of Paper" in P.V.M.A., VIII. Editor.



and people drifted back, Frary House was built, but why was it not built on the lot which Samson Frary drew? How did he get the right to build on one of Peter Woodward's lots?

Who can answer? Perhaps he wished to live opposite his friend Hinsdell;\* perhaps, because of Indian alarms, he felt more safe with nearer neighbors; but on Woodward's lot he did build his home, leisurely and honestly. Mr. Sheldon thought it might have been in 1683, but there Frary was certainly living in 1685. It was not until 1719 that Woodward gave a quitclaim deed to Nathaniel, son of Samson, and in the same year Nathaniel sold his father's own lot.

#### OCCUPANTS

In 1704 Samson, his wife and their orphaned grandchild, Mercy Root, were apparently the only occupants of the house. Samson and the child were killed, and lie with "The Dead of 1704." Mary, the wife, was about 64 years old. She, "captivated and lacking vigor to endure," was slain by her Indian master on the journey toward Canada; "for their manner was if any loitered to kill them." Nathaniel could not have been in Deerfield, as his name is not among those of the defenders or pursuers.

In 1752 his widow, reserving one room for herself, sold the house to Joseph Barnard, the meticulous builder of Willard House, now called The Manse. Probably neither he nor the next owner, David Arms, a joiner of Bloody Brook or South Deerfield, ever lived in the house.

In 1763 Salah Barnard, who had been a soldier, bought for 175 pounds the house built by Frary. Now choosing the ways of peace, he became a landlord and a store-keeper. When he was young and going out to war he went to the next house south to say good-bye to his

\* There lived Samuel Hinsdell, slain at Bloody Brook; and Mehuman Hinsdell, captured 1704 with his cousin, Josiah Rising. Miss Margaret Whiting now lives there. Editor.





friends Jeremiah and Mary Nims: seeing their baby in the cradle he bade the mother to keep her until he came back to marry her. Twenty years later, in 1765, they walked together across the greensward which separated her old home from the new.

Perhaps it was before his marriage that Barnard built the addition to Frary House, including the beautiful ballroom and the bar room or store; but we may be sure that the young wife liked to dance above-stairs while he poured cider below. From this front room in the southwest corner of the house, stairs lead to the cellar where the cider was kept. For many years and by many men this room was used as a store; and in 1812, more space being needed, a small building was erected in front of it. This was later removed by Pliny Arms to the rear and used as a kitchen.

A house is the shelter of family life: one generation after another lives and dies beneath its roof. Of those who lived here we know little. For nearly seventy years previous to 1876 the two parts, north and south, Frary House and Barnard House, had separate owners. The lot on which Frary House was built extended from land owned for more than two centuries by the Nims family to land on which now stands the parsonage. It seems probable that a small sandstone slab, unearthed before Frary House, marked the limit of the highway.

#### AS A TAVERN

To Deerfield, as to all New England towns, pre-revolutionary days brought excitement, and taverns were the gathering places for discussion. Here the majority of the townsmen were tories or loyalists. They were welcomed by David Hoyt in the Old Indian House and by Miss Baker's grandfather Major Seth Catlin, whose inn stood upon what was long the Wells lot. The Whigs sought David Saxton and doubtless his opposite neighbor Salah Barnard, whose large room offered hospitality for the larger meetings.



The Revolution brought to our old house a guest then noted and since notorious: Benedict Arnold. Having been commissioned as colonel, he was sent to western Massachusetts to recruit men to attack Ticonderoga. To feed them, he bought of Thomas W. Dickinson of Deerfield (later a colonel), 15,000 pounds of beef. The interview took place, said Dickinson's daughter Clarissa (who died in 1862), in the parlor of Frary House; instead of in the bar room—too ordinary a place for such as Arnold.

Arnold did not tarry in Deerfield to recruit men, but hurried on to Vermont. He was too late: to Ethan Allen\* the fort was surrendered. Thomas Dickinson, with his young brother Consider, followed Arnold with the cattle, receiving for his services only the glass of liquor from the pretty cupboard with its sliding shelf in the northwest room of Frary House.

#### OTHER GUESTS

While Augustus Lyman, blacksmith of Belcher-town, was host of the inn, there came to it a guest of royal blood. The Lymans' married daughter, living in Brighton, had a friend who was master of a vessel which sailed between Boston and the Sandwich Islands; and when he brought from there a youth of about sixteen years, it was suggested that the academy at Deerfield would be a good school for him to attend. So the boy came and appears on the list of pupils as "John Meek": think of that as the name of the heir-apparent to a throne! "Cryamakoo" was probably too difficult for our New England tongues, so he borrowed the name of the Boston sailor. But the youth died before his brother King Kamehameha, and never ruled the Sandwich Islands. Miss Fanny Wilson described him as a handsome, dark-skinned boy, short in stature. Much excited by his first snow-storm, he ran into the house crying that the sky was full of feathers.

\* A grandson of Deerfield: see Sheldon's genealogies, p. 23.





A visitor whom we must especially remember was a little girl who came just about a hundred years ago to visit her grandparents who lived in the southerly rooms. It was an all-day journey by stagecoach from Springfield. She and her kitten sat "on top," where the driver, for safety, tucked her under the boot, which she thought was a very funny name. After being put to bed in the spare room she was disturbed by a mouse, and went scurrying down the stairs—frightened, but ashamed because she had promised to be a brave girl. Then her grandmother went with her to a very large room; and this was C. Alice Baker's introduction to the room in which she was often to be the gracious hostess!\*

#### AT THE OLD TAVERN

On April 18, 1797, the first meeting of the trustees of Deerfield Academy was held at the tavern of Erastus Barnard.† This was the same school in which Miss Baker and earlier members of her family were pupils; the school in which she did her first teaching and found her life-long friend and fellow-worker, Susan Minot Lane, who came to Deerfield and became "preceptress" and Miss Baker's superior.

Of course, the town-folk came here to dance. The first date found is in 1799, when "Squire John Williams" wrote in his cash book "1 s. towards fiddlers at Erastus Barnard's wedding." At this period invitations to dance were printed on cards, of the size of a visiting card, and were sent in the names of "managers." The managers sought their lady guests at their homes and escorted them to "the Room." Three such invitations hang in the ball room. One reads "Exhibition Ball. The Honor of Miss Mercy Sheldon's Company is requested at E. Barnard's Hall at 7 o'clock P.M. Deerfield Sept. 2, 1802." The next year she is "Desired to attend at six o'clock,"

\* See Mrs. Sheldon's paper on Miss Baker, V, P.V.M.A. 352.

† This meeting for organization of an academy of national reputation is described at page 843 of the History of Deerfield. Editor.



and in June, 1803, a "Public Ball" is to begin at five. Surely the farmer boys would find it more convenient to begin at five p.m. than to finish at five a.m.

Another party held in 1812, was long remembered. To this "Aunt Annie Hinsdale," having no children of her own, invited 24 mothers of "the Street" to come with their 24 babies, born within the year.

The drama was not neglected, for in 1814 a youth of the village wrote and presented "The Emancipation of Europe or the Downfall of Bonaparte." The author is remembered, not as a great playwright, but as President Edward Hitchcock, of Amherst College.

Independence Day celebrations were held in the ball room. In 1814 Edward Hitchcock's oration was given under the auspices of the "Washington Benevolent Society," and "The Friends of Washington and of Correct Principles" were "respectfully invited to join the Procession & the festivities of the day."

#### MISS BAKER'S PURCHASE

Such was the past of Frary House; but when Miss Baker bought it in 1890 from the heirs of John Kelliher,\* the part built by her ancestor Samson Frary was almost a ruin. There was a hole in the roof; the lean-to leaned over-much; there were no windows in the parlor, which was then used for sorting tobacco and was the resort of idle children; a hen had made her nest in the little entry.

When asked why she had bought it, Miss Baker made one of three replies: To rescue it; To dance in it; To make a summer home for her mother—though not intending to spend entire summers in the valley. All three reasons were justified, but the purchase took both courage and vision. A friend and neighbor told her, in New England parlance, that if she bought that house she "ought to be committed." As we went through it in our first inspection, and literally went through a floor-board

\* Deed June 30, 1890: book 413, page 132, Registry of Deeds. Editor.





which broke beneath our feet, there seemed some justification for his viewpoint, but on that first day Miss Baker's mind saw it restored almost as it stands today.

The small entry, with its pretty staircase, was in front of the huge middle chimney; on the north side a parlor and bedroom, and on the south a "living-room or hall." Behind these was the kitchen. Above were parlor and living-room chambers, and under the slope of the roof a ladder-like staircase led to the garret. The kitchen, which was made into a dining room, was in a sad state. Its length, as was the fashion of old, well-proportioned houses, is twice its breadth. A charmingly graceful elm hugged the three east windows and had to be sacrificed because of the extension which was made for greater comfort.

The chimney-stack was large and unsafe—so unsafe that it had to be taken down to the ground floor, and so large that then the old house seemed but a big hole surrounded by three small rooms and a staircase. The fireplace had to be rebuilt, but the broken hearthstone was replaced, as was the crane and oven-door. To make sure that the big old bricks, blackened by two hundred years of smoke, were not rejected by the masons, Miss Baker overlooked the work and actually handled the bricks of her choice; causing an old Irishman to say "I've worked in brick for many a year, but I niver had a lady tinder before."

The pilasters of the entrance, made perhaps when the clapboards were placed, had lost their caps and bases. The original front door was missing. It must have been, like those of the period, made of two thicknesses of boards at right angles and perhaps studded with heavy nails as was the door of the Indian house. Perhaps the door had been used for fuel as had many of less importance. I recall that a gay circus-poster adorned the boards which filled the space. The present double door came from a house in Greenfield Meadows which had been the homestead and tavern of Captain Ebenezer



Wells, born in 1723 in Deerfield. With the door, in its cracked green paint, came its bull's-eye glass and the strong protecting bar. The heavy top-bolt came from the Barnard-Jenks house, and the lock and fastenings for bar from the "old town house."

#### HOUSE CONSTRUCTION

Our early building traditions were, of course, brought from England, and, sooner or later, adapted to our harsher climate. Our chimney-stacks had to be huge because of the generous proportions of the fireplaces. Here, as there, glass was scarce. In early houses there were very small casement windows, usually with diamond panes. Double-hung windows were not used before the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Miss Baker was fortunate in finding windows with heavy muntin, and more or less distorted and bubbly glass to replace broken panes.

The exterior may have been of primitive weather boarding—or colonial siding, which means very wide pine boards that the carpenter ornamented with chamfered edges; and in this house the boards were so wide that the builder added horizontal mouldings. The probability is based upon our having found this boarding when cutting through the wall between the old and newer parts of the house,\* and it is emphasized by the finding of similar siding on the John Williams house, built a few years later. It is not known how early clapboards were added, but "Ryvers of Clapboards, singles and lathes" were among our earliest workers. These old clapboards are of pine and are fastened with hand-wrought nails, doubtless forged from English iron.

#### RECONSTRUCTION

Frary House is a restful place because of its admirable proportions. One feels this upon entering the

\* The south wall of Frary House, to which Barnard House was added.





parlor. There the chimney-breast and a partition are paneled: other walls are plastered above a paneled wainscot. Over the fireplace were a score of layers of wall-paper and cotton; the law of "strip before you repaper" not having been observed. This fireplace was made smaller and blue biblical tiles (found in an old house in Newport, R. I.), were set around it; but Miss Baker regretted having used Dutch tiles at this distance from a seaport. The mantel-shelf was a concession, to provide a place for clock and candle sticks.

By making a wider opening, the bedroom became a connecting parlor which, because of the pictures we hung in it, was called the Canada room; and back of this was made a new kitchen. The room at the right of the front door is called the "Pewter Room." The shelves which hold the pewter occupy the space of a former opening into Barnard House. This room had a very large fireplace, with an oven which was not rebuilt. In the sandstone lintel is a small square recess for the flint and tinder box.

Miss Baker was very fortunate in having the aid of Mr. Sheldon, Mr. Horatio Hoyt and his son Clarence, all of whom took the greatest interest in this restoration. I remember that one night we were called from our supper to admire Mr. Hoyt's cart, piled high with treasures he had rescued from the woodpile of an owner who didn't like "old wooden closets and partitions"—which were indeed treasures for the dining room.

In Samson Frary's day cupboards were few and closets were none. For the china a small closet was built under some (new) back stairs and a fine panel from the Junkins house in York, Maine, makes its door. That house was tenanted only by hens when Miss Baker found, scrubbed and preserved the panel. The most interesting bit of wood in the dining room is the door of another small cupboard, as it is a part of that siding which may have been the original exterior of the house. It shows the chamfered moulding.



Miss Baker always loved old things, and from her Cambridge garret she brought her hoardings. From the Oliver Wendell Holmes house, which was next her own home in that city, she brought panels and drawers taken from the room in which the American generals planned the battle of Bunker Hill, and from which, as their headquarters, they set forth after prayer on the Common. The summer-tree in this dining room came from the Smead house (which stood north of the home of the Misses Brown); the floor joists were taken from "Uncle Sol Williams'" barn; and some of the paneling, grown a beautiful brown with the years, was in the Old Indian House and later in the woodshed of the house built upon its site.

Above-stairs in Frary House, the parlor bedroom is beautiful with time-stained wainscoting and summer-tree. The panels had been covered with a greenish water-color stain which was scraped off with glass. The small wall cupboard has a secret sliding base. The opposite room was made smaller, that the one behind, in the shed-like space under the lean-to, might be enlarged. Being given the choice of fireplace or closet, I chose the latter, and the rebuilt chimney was made a little smaller at that place.

The third bedroom is lighted by east dormer windows which do not spoil the line of the roof. In that room are exposed the big oak posts which support the frame of the house. These show marks of the axe, having been smoothed but little. From this room, as from the dining room below, a door leads into the newer part of the house, which Miss Baker called Barnard House in memory of its builder.

I have spoken of the store or bar room which was the front room of this part of the house. Behind this is the large chimney and the small square entry into which opens the pretty south door. On the entry walls there was left enough plaster to show the design and its pinkish color, and these clever Mrs. Wynne reproduced for





Miss Baker. The entry also opens into a more pretentious room which may have been the tavern parlor. It has a good fireplace, panels and sliding shutters with clumsy buttons. The walls were stenciled with cherries of an unusual color—blue, as I remember them.

On the walls of the two entries and their connecting staircase (northerly of these rooms) is an old paper which was brought to Boston in the early 1800's by Henry King Hoyt when he was in the legislature. His wife kept it in a linen bag in her garret until she gave it to Miss Baker. The paper was printed in small squares. Many were the treasures which came from that attic. Once Miss Baker expressed a wish for an old sickle: Mrs. Hoyt said "There is one here" and brought it to her. I exclaimed "I never knew anything like this house; I believe if I should ask for a red crêpe ball dress, you would produce it!"—and she did!

At the head of the stairs is the ball room, beautiful in its proportions, with coved ceiling and with recesses each side of the fireplace at its further end. These, like the eight windows, are edged with a delicate rope moulding. Fortunately, this room had not been seriously harmed during the days of its lesser glory. For family needs some partitions had been built, but these did not reach the ceiling. We could dance upon the floors of 1765 and sit upon the raised box-seats, as did the ladies of old, but these are not now hinged as when the grandmothers placed their red cloaks within. The room is lighted by candles in a tin chandelier which had been in a Vermont tavern—not the Catamount, as has been stated. Opposite the fireplace is a little balcony for the fiddler. For this, "Aunt Tirza" Williams, who was nearly a hundred years old, was responsible; for, during the restoration, she asked if "Alice" had found "the funny little cubby-hole at the west end," where she as a child used to go to watch her father and mother dance. Patched plastering revealed the spot, and a Boston architect made the drawings for the pretty railing. This balcony is reached by a



cramped stairway in what appears to be a clothes closet for the bedroom in the southwest corner of the house.

#### LIFE IN THE BALL ROOM

There could never have been a more beautiful ball in the old house than the house-warming given by Miss Baker in 1892, to which she asked the people of the village and her other friends to come in eighteenth century costume. The guests were received in the parlor, announced by our kind gardener masquerading in powdered wig and silk stockings! Being English, he dropped his aitches, to our delight.

A group of musicians played in the dining room, lighted, as was the whole house, by few lamps and many candles. Two rooms in Barnard House were furnished with card tables, and the gayly clad players added much to the picture. Miss Baker,—blue-eyed and blue-dressed, with a lace petticoat, blue feathers in her hair and a miniature of Washington at her throat,—with her cousin Mr. John Sheldon, led her guests through the parlor and dining room, up the stairs to the ball room where John Putnam, the colored fiddler of Greenfield, was waiting in the balcony to “call off.” A white fiddler stood behind him. Before the ball, Putnam came down to instruct us in the intricacies of the difficult old dances, many of which Miss Baker knew in her girlhood. She and Mr. Sheldon stood at the head of the lines as they formed for “Hull’s Victory,” which was followed by “Chase the Lady,” “Twin Sisters” and “The Ladies Triumph.”

A villager later described the ball to a visiting stranger, saying: “You don’t know Miss Baker; never heard of her ball? Why, they came from Boston and New York, Hartford, Springfield and the Adirondacks; they had hair-dressers and costumers and they danced the mignonette!” But we did not; we danced the Pavane, an older, more beautiful and difficult dance than the minuet.

The room was probably more variously used in Miss





Baker's day than ever before. In it, we organized the local Red Cross. To it, we sent invitations for a "braiding bee" to the women who had, years before, braided palm-leaf hats; and the first basket was sold, before it was completed, to a lady from San Francisco. Church services were held there while repairs were being made on the meeting-house; and there was a kindergarten exhibition. There was a concert of such music as Deerfield might have offered in the eighteenth century. And there were evenings with Kinder Symphonies and real Chamber Music, both amateur and professional, as friends were kind. We had much good singing and many merry dances.

Mrs. Mary P. Wells Smith read to children-guests from her then unpublished Stephen Williams tale, and Mr. J. Wells Champney gave two charming readings of Cable's Southern Stories. One evening Mrs. Madeline (Yale) Wynne repeated from memory the story of "*Peer Gynt*," which was illustrated by the music of the Suite and some Grieg songs.

After the beautiful World's Fair of 1893, several guests spoke of the things that had most interested them. Among these was Miss Helen Nicolay, daughter of Lincoln's secretary; and her subject was Art. Mr. Latham, the young principal of the academy, gave us the teacher's point of view colored by that of the bridegroom; and Wright Root of Wapping, who had served there as a chair-boy, told us about his experiences.

Our "Wednesday Mornings," which continued for two or three years, began when Mrs. Elizabeth Champney read chapters from an unpublished book while a group of friends listened and worked. Then several clever friends read from manuscripts, and Mrs. Twitchell came from Greenfield to talk about the beginnings of the Atlantic Monthly, published by the firm of which her father was a member. Jennie M. Arms (who was later Mrs. Sheldon) talked about Connecticut River clay-stones; and Mrs. Arthur Ball told us of Komura, later



the distinguished diplomatist who was sent to Washington from Japan. He had lived one summer in her father's family.

Admiral Higginson, who had been one of Miss Baker's pupils at the academy, talked to us once; and a banner day was that on which he brought with him Admirals Cook and Clark and they described the battle of Santiago. Clark, of the "Brooklyn," spoke with a big chart before him, and the other men added a word now and then. He thrilled us by describing the approach of a battleship, on a day during the siege when smoke made vision difficult. He thought it was Higginson's "Massachusetts," which had gone off to coal; but, lo! it was Clark's "Oregon," which had been lost to knowledge for "two silent anxious weeks," and now after the amazing voyage of 15,000 miles from San Francisco, reported "Ready for action."

On another Wednesday, Mr. Hosmer\* who, when young, had left the pulpit of our church to fight for the Union, talked about Sacajawea, who had in 1804 guided Lewis and Clark safely through the wilderness and through Indian tribes on their perilous journey to the northwest. Admiral Clark was present and, when asked if the Captain Clark of our generation would not tell us about his own return from the northwest, answered with a smile: "It was an easy sail." When speakers were lacking, Miss Baker was ready: sometimes with a carefully prepared paper; sometimes with a local subject, such as "Some Indian Visitors" who did not come to kill, and "Brick-making" in a yard beyond Memorial Hall.

In September, 1908, Miss Baker's last summer in Deerfield, we held a "Bizarre Bazaar." In the ball room Miss Mabel Brown and Messrs. William Allen and William Hutchins gave "Box and Cox"; Mrs. Gertrude

\* Rev. James K. Hosmer of Deerfield, author of "The Color Guard," and Rev. Samuel Fiske, native of Shelburne and author of "Dunn, Browne in the Army," were two of those who in the sombre sixties offered their young lives upon the altar of Freedom. Editor.





Ashley led a Kinder-Symphony orchestra and Miss Trowbridge (now Mrs. Arthur N. Fuller) added songs to the programme; and out of doors and in the barn were other attractions. The day was a great success, for we sent a thousand dollars to the Franklin County Hospital and there were at least ten, possibly twelve, automobiles in Old Deerfield street!

Such was life a generation or more ago in the house that C. Alice Baker, descendant of Samson Frary, saved and loved, filled with beautiful things, and leaves to posterity in the care of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association.\*

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## A DEERFIELD EPISODE

BY MARGARET C. WHITING

June stillness rested among the high elms that bent their long branches to make a green lane of the single roadway which divided the rows of old gray houses in our village. The road was a mile long, running as straight as need be to hold the North Star at the upper end of its course, and we called it The Street. Innocent of artificial surfacing, the way was sandy in summer, deep mud in spring and a snowy track between drifts in winter; it knew no other use than that of heavy farm wagons and light-running buggies, or sleds and "cutters" which met the alternating conditions of the seasons, with the adaptability demanded by their drivers. In winter oxen broke a tunnel between the piled snowbanks that was so narrow turning-out places at intervals were dug at the sides. Pedestrians walked in the track thus made for teams. They fared as best they could when they met one. Young folk waded into the drifts; elderly women have been known to boldly sit down backwards in the snow piles, and draw up their feet to escape a collision.

\* See notice at bottom of page 137.



In June, however, the villagers went on their errands along hard earthen paths between grassy banks where the old trees stood in close companionship with the door-yards they shaded, and the shifting sunlight made patterns across the road and flickered upon the small-paned windows that looked out upon the rural life following through the generations that made the village. Men had made the little settlement as nearly as possible like their forsaken English hamlets; if the habits of the early days, when the first comer had built his log house on his allotted holding, had gradually given way to modifying influences the changes had come slowly, and a Sunday morning in June was quietness itself with old-fashioned calm; the sleeping houses were closed yet awhile, for their owners "lay till six" of a Sabbath and their drowsy self-indulgence affected even the farm yard inhabitants to preserve the stillness.

At four o'clock it was shadowy with a shimmering forecast of the coming dawn; misty and dewy, too near the night's darkness to be quite reckoned as light. The hour was filled only with a gray calm. Motionless the trees, the houses. Time itself was but a suspended moment. And then—Magic!

The vague mists gathered into a shape, and moved. Noiseless under the trees, pacing on slow and soundless pads in the dim air, waving before his huge frame a meditative trunk that kept time to his progress, a great gray elephant. Solitary, serene, majestic, he was as if regally self-evoked in the still June Sunday morning that did not wake to see him pass through the village street. India's search for the calm of perfect peace, miraculously brought to hardy-minded New England. Did the old trees gather their branches closer to simulate the memory of the jungle, were the aging Yankee houses faintly aware of ancient temples, did the drowsy farmer-folk turn on pillows strangely scented with an unknown fragrance, and did not a sudden whiff of heady marigolds





in their own gardens disturb their dreams with an unfamiliar suggestion?

If the people did not rouse to glimpse their visitor as he pursued his silent way, were the wisps of mist about his bulk like a breath of incense, emanations from his old, old mind that veiled his thoughts? His small, attentive eyes gave no hint of what they saw in such an alien world of sleeping houses. In that silence he hardly seemed to move; his gently swaying trunk, the slow shambling of his great feet, the slight lift and droop of his huge head and the fall of his haughty ears, the shapeless massiveness that was his body were strangely imponderable, as though magic alone was responsible for his presence.

The cloudy hour of dawn seemed to thicken about his flanks, his form grew indistinct in the luminous rays of increasing light that drifted between the trees,—noiseless as he had come, he disappeared, melting into the further reaches of the road he trod. He was gone. The roadway was an empty green lane in the old New England village, that only knew of his coming by the foot-prints in the dust that marked his going.

All India had entered our village and left it, still asleep.

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## DEERFIELD'S YESTERDAY AS TOLD BY ITS TODAY

BY GEORGE B. BURNETT

Geology is perhaps a rather poorly classified subject. In our schools and colleges we find it listed as a science. We find, however, that scientists consider it a history. It is because of this fact that it becomes a suitable matter for discussion at a historical society meeting.

This history is composed of the most accurate records it is possible to leave. There are no written words with doubtful meanings; there are no weak links where an-

in those who have been thus treated with the most  
human consideration.

At the present day, it is not possible to find a single  
man of letters who does not regard the rights of man as  
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cient historians have feared for their very lives if they should displease their kings or dictators. Moreover, the student reader doesn't even have to carry any books around. It is all compiled in one volume, ever before his eyes. One cover of this first edition is 29,006 feet above sea level at the top of Mount Everest, the other 7,600 feet down in the earth's deepest mine in Brazil. In between, with only a few places where the book cutter slipped, are the pages open to the reader wherever he is able to see the face of a mountain, the wall of a canyon, or any other exposed surface.

This volume has Lithosphere, the earth's crust, written across its binding. We are choosing it in preference to its two sister volumes, Hydrosphere and Atmosphere, because of its slower rate of change. The other two would be most unsatisfactory recording mediums, as is easily seen if we look up in the air and try to see where the last bird flew by. There is no evidence as to how big he was, which way he went, or anything of interest about him. The same is true of our swimming friends. However, let the bird light for food or the swimmer crawl out on the muddy shore where his mark is left and we have another record for our book, complete in every detail.

The actual reading of the records is really very simple, as a historian's work goes. There are no involved translations to interpret. A glacier passing over the Russian steppes makes the same record in the book as it does in Sunderland. A volcano in Colombia records its activity in the amount of lava and ash piled up as it does in Alaska. There are no misleading newspaper headlines to confuse the issue. The recent quake in Turkey is receiving tremendous publicity, yet the steady daily work of the Mississippi does much more to change the appearance of the earth. The pages are bound as we would expect to find them with the first on the bottom and the last on top, all in good order except where a few corners have been turned down and these are easily straightened out.

If we do not trust the printed word for our history,





then how are we going to read it? That is easy. Instead of learning many languages by studying paper and print, we learn one universal tongue by familiarizing ourselves with the materials concerned and the agents and forces that work on these materials. We are going to learn to read history much as a detective reads a case. A mangled body found by the roadside doesn't prove anything on sight. But when we analyze the victim's clothes and find paint pigment of a certain type and glass fragments of a special lens, then we have dependable facts to work from. In geology we reduce the evidence to its basic parts. In short, we must know our rocks and minerals, a task which has been more or less of a hobby with most of us who like to pick up nice shiny stones and things.

Having mastered the materials of the earth, we find that we are able to group all the forces and agents at work under two processes. These are the destructive processes and the constructive processes. The first has two agents, disintegration and decomposition. We are more familiar with these terms than you probably realize. If you carry out the simple experiment of placing a dead fish on your back porch, you may observe both agents at work. There will be either a chemical decomposition that does funny things to the atmosphere, or there will occur mechanical disintegration by the neighbor's cat. If the experiment is followed closely you will observe that the two usually work hand in hand. So are mountain ranges worn down and carried away.

The constructive processes add new material to the surface of the earth and raise up new areas for habitation. Their agents would include volcanoes, and earth movements with uplifts. This matter of uplifts isn't so complicated to understand. Just keep in mind the picture of the farmer who piled so much grain on the tailgate of his wagon that he couldn't keep the front wheels on the ground. You can't get away with moving a 10,000-foot mountain around either and not expect the same thing to happen.



Now that we have seen how our history is written and read, let us read what available notes we have on Deerfield's past. Here in Old Deerfield we are fortunate in having a large quantity of material at our command. The shapes and composition of all the land marks that are loved so well express more than mere physical beauty. They hold the complete historical record of our valley. Arthur's Seat, Pine Hill, Red Rocks, Pocumtuck Mountain, and Hosmer's Peak; they are all invaluable pages in the great volume.

Instead of baffling ourselves with the millions of years, let us divide our history into the three customary periods, ancient, medieval, and modern.

Reading from our oldest records, the hard rocks that make up Arthur's Seat and the highlands to our west, we learn that our valley's beginnings must have been under rather grim conditions. How else could such a battered remnant of some former material come to be?

Only a period of extreme unrest could account for what we find here. The prominent slaty cleavage of the rock, easily confused with the bedding planes of water-laid sediments, tells us that tremendous pressures were applied. This causes all the particles in the rock to line up with their long axes perpendicular to the direction of the applied pressure, giving the rock a parallel cleavage as in slate. To illustrate, let's pretend that we are all lying flat on the floor at various angles and a large push broom is brought into play. We would find ourselves peeling off the back wall in layers with our long axes perpendicular to the handle of the broom. As you can imagine, all this would develop a considerable amount of friction and heat as is evidenced by the fact that our rock is shot through with quartz that was introduced into cracks as a hot water solution.

Closing our ancient history, we have a very uninspiring picture of Deerfield as a badly down-warped region between two rugged highlands.

Our next, or medieval, stage of development holds





material of greater interest to us. Here we find the formation of the land forms that we are more familiar with. We also see the development of fish and reptiles, our only contribution to the advance of animal life up to recent times.

We find that no sooner was this trough formed than it began to fill with material washed in from the sides. Finally the highlands were worn down and the basin was filled up until they formed a level plain on an approximate line with Arthur's Seat. This plain was raised a little and tilted slightly to the southeast, resulting in the start of several streams. Not the Connecticut as we know it now, but a series of parallel streams running directly to the sea and following this southeast slope. The West River at Brattleboro was part of the Blackstone; the Deerfield ran directly southeast and was part of the Willimansett; and the Westfield continued in a straight line via Hop Brook to the Sound. The Connecticut is a later development of the Farmington as it eroded its way northward cutting off one stream at a time until it reached its present length. Tracing the development of these streams is interesting but the importance of their work lies in the fact that they have carved into all this material so that we are now able to see just what was going on during that filling of the old trough.

Examining the material just as we see it, we find a fine shale formed from mud on the bottom; a red sandstone with a layer of lava in the middle; and a conglomerate or rock formed from cemented gravel on top. These are readily seen at Whittemore's Mills, Red Rocks, Pocumtuck Rock, and Hosmer's Peak. We also note that the finest shales and sandstones are on the western side of the valley showing that most of the material must have come from the east, as particles grade off in size as they are carried farther from their source.

There are three bits of evidence of a former existing range to our east. It must have had an altitude of some 10,000 feet and is referred to as the old New England



Alps. In the first place we can get a rough idea of the size from the amount of material that it took to fill this basin from New Haven to Bernardston to a height above that of the rock. The size and shape of the pebbles and stone in the rock tell us how far they have come. Another interesting thing is a reverse talus slope on the east side of Toby. From this we are able to estimate the slope of the great mountain as a talus slope always lies just under the angle of roll. It is composed of the sharp angular fragments that roll down the sides of mountains. In this case it is so old that it has cemented itself into a rock, but it still shows us the facts that interest us.

If such a mountain were ever there we would expect to find at least some part of its roots, and in this we are not disappointed. They are the outcroppings of coarse igneous rock that we find to the east of Toby and running south under the high-tension line. We know how deep the molten mass that formed this rock must have been buried to cool slowly enough to be coarse. Otherwise we would find a fine-grained rock as the trap rock that cooled on the surface so rapidly that no minerals had a chance to separate out.

Our Revolutionary ancestors knew about these ancient outcroppings. We may still visit their open surface mines where they dug out the mineral galena, roasted off the sulphur and had pure lead for their bullets. Long closed by our richer deposits in the west, these mines in Leverett were very valuable at the time when our forebears were limited to the eastern seaboard for the natural resources with which they had to protect and advance their position.

As this range was eroded down, the material was washed into the rocky basin forming extensive mud flats and choking what lakes and streams were present. Also climatic conditions were shifting and the region was growing more and more arid. During the early part of the period of filling we notice that fishes and reptiles were flourishing. We have a picture of lakes well stocked





with fully developed fish, not unlike our bass and sunfish. Dinosaurs were roaming around, probably coming down from eating shrubs on the mountain sides to wander about the mud flats looking for water, or reeds to munch. Their tracks were baked out by the hot sun and dusted over. As a period of flood washed more mud out on the flats we have the original tracks preserved in both the concave and convex. These tracks are found in great numbers in the shales from Gill to Holyoke.

The fish in the meantime were finding conditions growing worse and worse. Their waters were evaporating too rapidly and mud was being washed in so fast that life was becoming most unendurable, even for a fish. They died by the score. The only fortunate part of the whole affair being that the mud was settling out so fast that they were covered over as soon as they hit the bottom. They are still there after millions of years. The richest deposits in the world are found just across the river at Whittemore's Mills, giving our neighboring town the questionable distinction of international recognition for its dead fish. Seriously, the historical value of the deposit is easily recognized.

Soon after this the region became so arid that our pleasant valley was marked as an extremely undesirable place to live. In fact the reputation was so bad that all of our forms of life are of rather recent introduction from more hospitable areas. The red color of our sandstones tell how arid things were. This color is due to an iron cement that would not form under humid conditions because it is the pure oxide, which means that the hydrous or water element has been driven off.

The filling-in process progressed at a much faster rate under these conditions. Before long so much weight had been shifted around that lines of weakness developed, resulting in various faults and fissures. These acted as outlets for the lava generated by the disturbances that were starting up volcanic activity. Times were generally hectic and account for the two flows that we are familiar



with, one capping the Holyoke Range and the other our own Pocumtuck Ridge. The neck of the volcano is just south of Mt. Holyoke but, as is the case with volcanoes, most of the lava wells out these long rift fissures in a most unspectacular manner as far as pyrotechnics are concerned. The closest example is in the opening of a warm bottle of ginger ale. As we all know, the initial blast is the most spectacular but the real trouble comes when the stuff begins to slowly well out all over the place.

Further deposition reduced the area to the plain that we have already mentioned. The angles in our beds of sandstone tell us that there was more action along the faults. There is one along the north front of the Holyoke Range, and as Pocumtuck slopes east  $23^{\circ}$  and Toby only  $5^{\circ}$ , there must be one along the course of the Connecticut.

Most of our local features are due to the streams carving into this upraised plain that we have seen formed. Arthur's Seat and the old rocks to our west were uncovered. The old basin was excavated to a level with Red Rocks, with Pocumtuck Ridge standing up as a great canyon wall. The whole place was just a sandstone waste of canyons and little bumps here and there as we see in the core of Pine Hill. This hill was formed by the Deerfield meandering around but the reason it was cut off and left is that it has a coherent sandstone core which may be seen sticking out on the west side at the north end of the hill.

Things were progressing very happily along these lines until operations were interrupted by a great ice sheet that worked down over the region. This glacier stopped all canyon cutting but did a little characteristic whittling of its own in the way of gouges, and rounding sharp points. It is the retreat of this ice that ushers in our modern era and adds the final touches to our present picture.

The glacier over Deerfield reached a thickness of some 3,000 feet. The resulting weight was enough to depress





the land 250 feet. At the end of this period of glaciation it was natural that the southern end should start melting first. Because of this the land to the south rose up again first. The result was a lake basin that lasted until all of the land had been freed of its load and had risen back far enough to dump all of the water out into the sound.

When this had been accomplished it was discovered that the old red sandstone canyons were all choked up with clay, mud, sand, and gravel which had been washed into the lake, a most discouraging sight for our rivers which had carved out such nice deep canyons in the sandstone. However, the show must go on, and there was nothing to do but get to work and clean the mess out as soon as possible. Today, after some 12,000 years of work we find the job about half done.

As the last of the lake trickled out of our valley, the Deerfield found itself faced with quite a problem. Its old channel had been buried beyond any trace, and it had choked its own mouth by playing around in the edge of the lake and building the big delta that may be seen over near Stillwater. It finally managed to cut down through this and made several futile attempts at following its old course southward. The frustrated stream worked down to about the Gables before it gave up and turned north looking for an easier way out. This it found by joining the Green and flowing out through Cheapside. Maintaining this course through modern times, it has wandered back and forth across Wapping and Deerfield finishing up all of the surface features as we see them today.

The level of the old lake bottom is easily read from the terraces on the west side of the valley, those above us here at the foot of Shack Hill, as well as the rise up to the level from Wapping to the Gables. Shack Hill has little dips in it showing where the different shore lines occurred as the level of the lake receded. Pine Hill has been carved out as one of our beauty spots with a little Oxbow Lake on the west side where the river has cut off one of its own bends.



We have still to mention the most important feature of this modern history. As we pass from the "Dark Ages" we find that a bare rock canyon country, most unliveable, has changed to a broad valley floor with a deep rich lake bottom furnishing a fertile topsoil. Seeds began to take hold. With the change to a more favorable climate trees and forests began to spring up. Best of all, animal life too discovered that, after all, New England wasn't such a tough place in which to live; they came from all directions. The good word must have been pretty wide spread because the porcupines came all the way up from South America, and if you have ever seen a porcupine walk you can appreciate what an undertaking that was.

The last arrivals were the Indians. These wandering Mongolian savages crossed over from Siberia with the retreat of the ice. Once on this side, some of their number traveled east via the system of lakes that stretch across Canada and our northern states. Reaching the eastern seaboard they turned toward the south. Here they found forests abounding in game and fertile fields on the valley floor for their corn. This was the picture that greeted our forefathers as they pioneered this Deerfield Valley.

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## A FORGOTTEN ANCESTOR

BY F. N. THOMPSON

In the murky background of Deerfield history there lurk shades who were not of Deerfield and whose surnames, if called in the Deerfield of today, would awaken no response; yet they partake of its present life through us, their descendants. One of those ancients was three times married, had thrice three children and is the ancestor of many Deerfield families; yet his own family name is no longer spoken here.





**BALDWIN**

**JOSEPH BALDWIN** probably came to America from Cholesbury, County Bucks, England. He was in Milford, Connecticut, in 1639; removed to Hadley 1662/3; and died November 2, 1684. I do not know that any of his many children were killed or captured by the French and Indians, but the families of his three daughters who married Deerfield men were not so fortunate. Perhaps descendants of Baldwin's other children came also to Deerfield, but these I have not traced. Hannah, Mary and Martha Baldwin married Jeremiah Hull, John Catlin and John Hawks, in 1658, 1662 and 1667; and at about that period this region became "the western frontier."

**1. HULL**

**HANNAH BALDWIN** and her husband **JEREMIAH HULL** appear to have been the parents of that Jeremiah Hull who in 1688 married Mehitable Smead, and dying in 1691 left two young children, Elizabeth and Jeremiah 3rd. This boy perished in 1693/4 when the home of his stepfather (Godfrey Nims) was burned. The daughter and her mother were captured in 1704 and the mother was slain on the march toward Canada. Elizabeth Hull was redeemed and in 1707 was married by Parson Williams to John Nims, who had been captured in 1703 and escaped in 1705. They dwelt in the house still standing on "the town street" of Old Deerfield, and their gravestones are in the burial place of the forefathers.

**2. CATLIN**

**MARY BALDWIN**, her husband **JOHN CATLIN** and their family, suffered greatly at the Deerfield Massacre. He was killed and, though her life was spared because of her kindness to a French soldier, she died a few weeks later—on April 9, 1704. Three of their daughters, like the earlier generation, married Deerfield men:



Thomas French, James Corse and Ebenezer Smead. I will speak in a moment of the fate of these French, Corse and Smead families in 1704. Another daughter, Ruth, was captured and after three years in Canada returned to Deerfield. The son Jonathan was slain. A son, Joseph Catlin, had married Hannah, daughter of Ensign John Sheldon. This Joseph was "one of the seven brave men who defended the Benoni Stebbins house 1704, and one of the nine who fell in the Meadow fight." Hannah Sheldon Catlin, in the Stebbins house with her husband, was wounded during the attack. Their son John—captured in 1704 and returned in 1706—married in 1715 Mary, daughter of Benjamin and Thankful Nims Munn, and their sons founded the Joseph, Seth and Oliver Catlin families. John's Uncle John, another son of Mary Baldwin Catlin, married a sister of that Edward Allen who was killed at The Bars in 1746—dying that his children might escape by flight. I return to the record of the three Catlin daughters; grandchildren of Joseph Baldwin.

#### 2-A. FRENCH

Mary Catlin, wife of the first Thomas French, was captured in 1704 and (like her Cousin Mehitable) killed on the march. One of their children was slain and five were captured. Of these captives two were probably brought back by Ensign Sheldon, father of their Aunt Hannah Catlin. Thomas French was captured and returned.

#### 2-B. CORSE

Elizabeth Catlin, wife of the first James Corse, was also captured and slain on the northward march. Their daughter of the same name was captured and never returned, though her brother James Corse, Jr. (whose wife was another daughter of Benjamin and Thankful Nims Munn), armed with a passport from Governor Dummer, made a journey to Canada in search of her.





## 2-C. SMEAD

Esther Catlin married the first Ebenezer Smead, and their daughters married men named Arms, Wells, Graves, Martindale and Nims. Sons found wives in the Barnard, Nims and Field families. Thus was the Baldwin blood widely spread among the old families of Deerfield.

## 3. HAWKS

MARTHA BALDWIN and her husband JOHN HAWKS had one son, John. This grandson of Joseph Baldwin married in 1695 Thankful Smead of Deerfield, sister of the Mehitable and Ebenezer named above. The three were children of William Smead, and of his wife Elizabeth Lawrence who also perished in 1704 with the wife and children of her son Samuel Smead. John and Thankful Smead Hawks and their three children (and John's half-sister Elizabeth) were all slain during the massacre.

## THE SLAIN

So among the Deerfield martyrs were a son-in-law (John Catlin) of the forgotten immigrant, Baldwin; two granddaughters (Mary Catlin French and Elizabeth Catlin Corse); three grandsons (Joseph and Jonathan Catlin and John Hawks, Jr.); the wives of two grandsons (Mehitable Smead Hull-Nims and Thankful Smead Hawks); and four great-grandchildren (the babe John French, John Hawks, aged eight, and his younger sisters Martha and Thankful): *twelve* slain in the massacre.

## CAPTIVES

Among the captives who were not slain were *eleven* of this family: two grandchildren (Ruth and John Catlin); the husband of a granddaughter (Thomas French); seven great-grandchildren (Elizabeth Hull Nims, Mary, Thomas, Freedom, Martha and Abigail French, seven-



teen to six years old, and Elizabeth Corse aged eight), of whom but three returned to their homes; and the husband (John Nims) of a great-granddaughter.

#### BALDWIN BLOOD

I have made this brief compilation so that we may remember for a moment the name of one whose descendants, bearing other names than his, fought in the early days for the preservation of the little plantation on the Deerfield frontier, were driven captive over the long cold trail to Canada 236 years ago, or died for the soil we love and the homes we cherish. I speak the forgotten name because in our own veins, and in the veins of those whose familiar names are often upon our lips, there flows the blood of JOSEPH BALDWIN.

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### THE OLD WORLD PASTURE

BY JONATHAN PORTER ASHLEY

To those of us who have had the privilege—rare in these modern, exciting days—of studying the Latin poets at the feet of a great teacher, the lovely lyrics and stately strains of Horace and Catullus are indeed an inspiration. In the fall of 1908 I, together with a motley crowd of robust youths seeking not so much an education as an easy step toward a diploma, elected to take the course in Sophomore Latin under the benign guidance of Prof. William L. Cowles at the nearby college of Amherst. Strange to say, it was an easy course and, *mirabile dictu*, we learned to like Latin. If you were to ask that same group of men today what course they enjoyed most at Amherst, the answer would invariably be: "Sophomore Latin under Billie Cowles."

Two of the Professor's favorite sonnets of Catullus, which I have always enjoyed, were "At his Brother's Grave," and the "Happy Return to Sirmio." Tennyson





has combined the ideas of these two bits of verse in the beautiful and familiar poem, "Frater Ave Atque Vale."

"Row us out from Desenzano, to your Sirmione row!  
So they row'd, and there we landed—'O ventusa Sirmio!'

There to me thro' all the groves of olive in the summer glow,

There beneath the Roman ruin where the purple flowers grow,

Came that 'Ave atque Vale' of the Poet's hopeless woe,

Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen hundred years ago,

'Frater Ave atque Vale'—as we wander'd to and fro  
Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the Garda Lake below

Sweet Catullus's all-but-island, olive-silvery Sirmio!"

Now what, you may ask, has all this to do with the Old World pasture! Patience, gentle reader, and soon you will learn. I do not know when or why this particular section of Deerfield was called "The Old World." Mr. Sheldon, in his *History of Deerfield*, mentions the Old World as a part of "Wisdom," now known as West Deerfield. No date is given, but I assume that the name came into use soon after 1700. The quiet and the solitude of the region so far removed from the rest of the "New World" civilization is a possible explanation. In my grandfather's day it was also known as the "West Pasture."

One does not need to row a boat to arrive at the Old World, as Catullus did to reach Sirmio. However, despite the bridges across the Deerfield River at Cheapside and Stillwater, the journey is fully as arduous and difficult. A few years ago I went there by automobile with our genial Selectman, George Fuller, and Mr. Cyril Raymond, the State Engineer in charge of small town roads. We were measuring the distance from the main



road to the pasture. Turning off the upper West Deerfield road, we entered what seemed to be an abandoned wood road on which we were soon busy dodging boulders and trees which stood sometimes outside, and sometimes between the ruts we were trying to follow. The car leapt merrily from ledge to ledge; we forded a babbling brook, and climbed a hill literally steeper than the roof of a house. Finally we reached our destination, a mile and a half from West Deerfield. As we disembarked and began to take stock of the sundry bumps and bruises which we had acquired on our perilous trip, I casually asked our Engineer, "Cy, have you ever driven a car over this road before?" "No," promptly replied Mr. Raymond, "and I hope that I never have to do it again!" The road has been repaired somewhat since that time, but there is still room for improvement. If one values his car at all, I would advise him to stop where he can turn around in safety, and to continue his way on foot.

The town road ends at the barway of the Ashley pasture, but I have more than a suspicion that it was, in former days, an old stage road to Shelburne and the west. The topography of the country seems to indicate that such might have been the case, and an unused barway at the top of the hill would appear to serve such a purpose very well. Perhaps it was a continuation of the old Albany Road which starts at the Old Deerfield common, although Judge Thompson probably would not agree with me in this assumption.\*

There are no Roman ruins in our Old World; but near the brook at the bottom of the little valley, there is an abandoned cellar hole surrounded by several old apple trees which must have been planted by man. Along the stone wall there is a patch of rhubarb, and some pretty rose bushes, which compare very favorably with the purple flowers of the poet. Mr. Sheldon states that Cyrus Brown, ancestor of our late beloved and respected citizen of the same name, once lived there. As the pasture

\* Good guess; but, by request, I delete nothing. Editor.





has belonged to the Ashley family since 1773, I do not see how anyone else came to build there; nor can I see how he made a living. And yet the cellar hole, rhubarb, roses, and apple trees bespeak of human habitation.

One of the most useful appurtenances to a pasture is a fence, although feed, shade and water are equally necessary. Our ancestors built well when they erected the rude stone walls which run up and down our hills and vales, straight on the compass, and many of them useful today. My admiration goes out to those early pioneers who, with back-breaking toil, gathered the loose rocks and stones on the line to form a fence which no cattle crossed. O pioneers, I salute you: *Ave atque Vale!* Robert Frost knew whereof he wrote in "Mending Wall" when he says, "Good fences make good neighbors!" No truer words were ever spoken. I can well imagine those busy days on the hillside when, with oxen and stoneboat, the rocks were gathered from far and near. The large ones, pried from their resting places, were laid at the bottom of the wall, while the smaller ones, balanced and chinked up with broken pieces, were placed on top in the hope that neither frost nor man would throw them down. Today, barbed or woven wire has replaced the rail fences and stone walls our ancestors built. But the stones remain and the line runs true, although the sturdy race of men who laid them has long gone to its last reward to where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the blessed sleep in peace." Hail and farewell!

"Let not ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;  
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile  
The short and simple annals of the poor."

On April 20, 1773, my illustrious ancestor, Rev. Jonathan Ashley, bought of Ebenezer and Abner Arms, yeomen, for £35, Lot No. 4 in the south half of Deerfield, northwest division, containing 104 acres, bounded on the east by the Seven Mile Line (so called). So says the



deed which is before me, and which is dated in the "Thirteenth year of his Majesty's Reign." Nevertheless, I have a faint recollection of reading in the *Proprietors Records* or elsewhere that this land was given to Mr. Ashley as the minister's share when that part of the township was originally divided up. At some time in the distant past, my ancestors divided the pasture by a stone wall through the center running north and south. This was to keep the cows on one side and the young stock on the other. I have always thought that this was labor wasted, as the fence was never kept up in my time, if ever. In the eastern part rises Arthur's Seat, 1000 feet high, the greatest elevation in Deerfield. Mr. Sheldon writes that "this point is not difficult of access, and the view from it is extensive and grand." I was once told that it was named for Arthur Hoyt who, while recovering from a severe illness, was wont to sojourn there and commune with nature. From this elevation one can look over Pocumtuck to Mt. Toby and the Pelham hills on the east. Mt. Tom and the Holyoke Range are visible on the south, as is the Connecticut River. To the north Monadnock raises its stately crown, and westerly the Berkshires rise step on step to the summit of Greylock. It is one of the best views that I know of anywhere.

One of the earliest spring tasks is to repair the fences. We no longer "mend wall"; we "fix fence." Usually, half the small tools on the farm are loaded into a one-horse wagon, and we start for the pasture. Arriving there, Old Bess is tied to a convenient tree to wait for noon, and the tools are apportioned according to the size and strength of the workers. Shovel, ax, crowbar, wire puller and stretcher, hammer, and an assortment of spikes, nails, and staples complete our equipment. A Swiss mountain climber has a light load and an easy job compared to that of one who would fix fence in the Old World. Often the stoutest member of the party carries a 90 lb. reel of barbed wire on his shoulder. This task proves irksome when the barbs pry through shirt and





jumper, and reach the tender flesh. We proceed up the hill, stopping here and there for necessary repairs. A wire is broken; a post rotted off; a few stones must be relaid. Sometimes a long rail is cut to lay on top of the wall more as a camouflage than for actual value. Did you ever try to dig a posthole with shovel and bar in a broken ledge of rock? The labor is invigorating, to say the least. Usually, when the pasture is bordered by a wood, the fences are not too well kept up. Trees, which serve as fence posts, are likely to fall over, and there is little feed there, anyway. Until a new fence is absolutely necessary, we often cut some brush and string it along in an artistic manner, with a prayer that no inquisitive heifer will poke through, as often happens, to see what lies beyond. This latter occurrence is not an unusual one in haying season or almost anytime when we are very busy. Well known is that annoyance when we are informed by a neighbor that "your cattle are out; come over and get them back right away." And it must be done, too.

When pastures lie side by side, it is customary to divide the length of the fence for upkeep. Then, when the cattle do get out, you have the satisfaction of pointing to the hole in your neighbor's section and of asking him what he had been doing all spring. Sometimes we fix the fence together, and a field day is had. A jug of cider is brought along to keep up our courage. There is nothing so refreshing on a hot day in the pasture or in the hay field as a sip of good, cold cider at noontime. Not only does the food taste better but also the tongue loosens to promote better feeling between neighbor and neighbor. But have a care—don't drink too much of it, else you may spend the rest of the day asleep under a tree. Your colleagues will wake you up in time to go home for chores. I know whereof I speak. But at that, I would not swap a jug of good New England cider for all of the old Falernian wine about which Q. Horatius Flaccus sings so joyously.

After the fence is fixed the cattle are turned out to





pasture. That is another story which time prohibits my enlarging upon here. Suffice it to say, the well-kept lawns and gardens of Old Deerfield are certain to suffer when I turn loose a herd of excited cows and yearlings which has been penned up in the barn all winter. I have solved the problem in part by engaging two husky boys to ride their bicycles along the sidewalks to keep the livestock as near the middle of the road as possible. When Stillwater Bridge is reached, the cattle are quite docile and, if the day is hot, much urging is needed to complete their forward progress to the pasture. We usually turn out about the 10th of May, especially when it is near a Saturday, when the youth of America is not in school, and each can help to the extent of his ability. It is not advisable to turn out the cattle too early as the young stock especially are likely to eat the poisonous leaves of the laurel if the grass is too short. My great-uncle John had an infallible remedy for this difficulty. When sick calves in the pasture were reported, he started for pasture with a basket of eggs. Breaking one in the mouth of each sick creature, he made it swallow the egg, shell and all. This proved to be a successful antidote, and conditions were soon reported as normal. We brought the cattle home around Nov. 10, or sooner, if snow came. There is not much profit in leaving cattle in pasture after the grass has ceased to grow.

Why do people like to visit the Old World Pasture? There are several reasons which appeal to me. The careful husbandman makes a weekly trip, usually on Sunday, to salt the cattle and to take an inventory, seeing to it that none are "over, short or damaged," as they say in railroad parlance. Cattle like salt, and soon learn to come when the farmer raises the call of "Come, boss," in stentorian tones that reecho from woods and rocks. An answering bellow is heard from the mountain top and soon the herd comes into view, the yearlings in the lead, rushing madly, down the steep hillside, or following more carefully along the many cowpaths made by the beasts





themselves. An anxious mother will stop and call softly to a week-old baby, all legs, and half-hidden in the brush, fearful of its first sight of man, its master. After they are counted, the forward springers are inspected for signs of an early freshening. A swelling udder means that the cow should be taken home where such veterinary knowledge as may be available is often useful during the process of calving. No good farmer will allow his cows to calve in pasture, if he can help it. On the other hand, a dry cow can be taken to pasture at any time during the summer, and left to shift for herself until fall, provided there is enough feed and water for her maintenance.

Hunters often come to the Old World. The hills and valleys are said to teem with deer, foxes, and rabbits. Somehow I rather doubt this claim. There are plenty of squirrels, red and gray, and an occasional woodchuck pokes his head from his shallow burrow. Now and then a good string of trout is caught in the dark recesses of a woodland stream, but most bits of running water in this region can hardly be dignified by the name of stream—a brook is the better description, and lucky is he whose pasture is well-watered through a long, hot summer. I am no hunter, except for an occasional search for a missing yearling or a new-born calf. One spring I found the bones of a two-year old steer, lost from the herd the fall before, caught in a wire snare set by some miscreant in search of deer. And as for fishing, the last time I indulged in that pastime was many years ago, when two of us pulled our companion from a hole in the ice on Broughton's Pond. We on the farm usually get enough exercise without tramping the woods with rod and gun, or matching our skill with that of others on the golf links.

To an artist the Old World is a paradise. Although there are no olive groves and the Garda Lake with its Lydian laughter as in "sweet Catullus's all-but-island, olive-silvery Sirmio," the silver birches stand out clearly against the darker background of the maples and oaks.





In the spring the pink and white blossoms of the apple trees contrast sharply with the dark green of the hillside, while the dull gray rocks form a picture which must be seen to be appreciated. A few ancient, weather-beaten pines and oaks spring from the ledges; their branches gnarled and broken from the storms and frosts of centuries. Most of the stately, spreading chestnuts have succumbed to the ravages of the blight; here and there one stands stripped and dead, to remind us of its former glory. A little brook, starting from nowhere under the shadow of Arthur's Seat, tumbles softly down the verdant slope, dropping gently over the ledges to disappear in the woods only to emerge at the bottom of the valley to offer refreshment for man and beast. The *chiaroscuro* of the woods and hills as the shadows deepen and the white clouds sail across the deep, blue sky, has often been painted with beautiful effect, while the *genre* atmosphere of the humble kine, as they stand quietly grazing or just lying there chewing their cuds, would delight the soul of Rosa Bonheur or Paul Potter.

The geologist is right at home in the Old World. The late Professor Benjamin K. Emerson of Amherst College—"good old Emmie" to those of us whom he once led hither and yon in search of knowledge—once wrote a ponderous monograph on the "Geology of Old Hampshire County." Some of this is interesting reading, but much of it is too erudite for the layman. The professor states that these western hills of which Arthur's Seat is a part, are made of Silurian mica schist. That indicates that they are very, very old, and were formerly much higher. The ledges are a beautiful example of metamorphic rock, originally laid down by the action of water and then fused and twisted by heat and pressure into their present formation. Small veins of pure white quartz stand out, and tiny flakes of mica glisten in the sun. Where iron particles have filtered in, an outcrop of rose quartz is seen. Garnets abound here and there, easily extracted from the rock with the point of a penknife. On





top of the hill is a large granite boulder which I like to think was brought down from far away Labrador by the mighty glaciers which once covered this region a mile deep with crushing, grinding ice, and whose retreat left our hills covered with loose stones of all kinds and sizes wherewith to build our stone walls.

These hills were old when the dinosaurs wallowed in the marshes that bordered the estuary which has since become the Connecticut Valley. They saw the cracks open up through which the lava flowed, covering the sandstone; later, they witnessed the mighty cataclysm which hurled the strata upward and tilted it to the east. The Holyoke range was thrown across the arm of the sea extending northward from Long Island Sound, and this damming up of the waters formed the prehistoric Deerfield Lake, whose bottom now forms the fertile fields of the middle Connecticut Valley. The ancient delta of the Deerfield River can plainly be seen jutting into the fields of West Deerfield. It is now an excellent gravel bank, which furnishes the material with which to improve the roads of the town. I like to stand on the summit of Arthur's Seat and gaze eastward over this old lake site to the sharp escarpment of Pocumtuck, left tilted by the force of nature with the basalt overlying the sandstone. The quiet little village, with its church spire rising above the surrounding trees, seems very much in keeping with the whole picture. Beyond Pocumtuck lie Mt. Toby, and the granite of the Pelham hills, considered by some as a part of the Laurentian plateau, the oldest land known in America, which rose from the vast deep "when chaos was, and night."

Here, then, are several reasons to account for the appeal of the Old World Pasture; thrice blessed is the philosopher who experiences all of them. I have always thought that man arrives in this world with an inborn sense of appreciation of all that is good and beautiful in life. Often he needs only to be told in order to realize the beauty that is round about him. Education does not con-



sist of years spent in school and college. It is more a realization that outside the realm of business and of earning a living, there is a world to be discovered which will make life more worth-while and more interesting. The mind of the farmer, the business man, or the teacher will grow small if he thinks only of the chores and routine of his daily life. Come with me to the Old World Pasture and see it through the eyes of the husbandman, the artist, the geologist and the philosopher! Then we can say with Catullus, "how willingly, how joyfully do I revisit thee, scarcely believing that I have left Thyni and the Bithynian plains, and behold thee in safety!"

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## ODDITIES IN LOCAL PLACE-NAMES

BY LUCY CUTLER KELLOGG

There is much within easy grasp for minds to know, and much of this knowledge is brought to light at these annual meetings.

There is a certain fascination in the study of origins, and when we hear of a place or section bearing a name to us curious or unusual, we immediately begin to question, Why? To some extent this paper will furnish an answer as to such names occurring in our Franklin County towns: it does not claim to include them all.

Beginning with the name "Ashfield"—itself not peculiar, but bestowed in a seemingly irregular manner. When the people of Huntstown petitioned for incorporation in 1765, the space for the name of the town, was, in the petition, left blank. Sir Francis Bernard was then Governor of the Colony of Massachusetts and he seems to have had a fondness for giving town names, as it is said he did in twenty-eight cases.

At this time, says the Ashfield history, Lord Thurlow of the parish of Ashfield, England, was very prominent there and in hearty sympathy with Governor Ber-





nard in his feeling toward the colonies; so the latter, with his penchant for naming towns and with the opportunity given him at the last stage of the bill, doubtless filled the blank space with the name Ashfield in honor of his English friend. At the time of the Ashfield Centennial observance in 1865, the statement was made that this was the only town in the world bearing that name.\*

Within the limits of Ashfield there are names attracting attention. Many of the settlers coming from the Cape Cod region and several of the families settling near each other, the highway passing by their homes soon became known as "Cape Street," and so it has always remained. "Little Switzerland" is a name of more recent origin, given in recognition of the beauty of that section, as travellers felt that it compared favorably with the older Switzerland of Europe.

Of "Peter Hill" it is told that one Peter Wells, or Peter "Guinea," born in Guinea, Africa, and taken by a slave trader when about seven years old, was held a slave in Connecticut and belonged to the father of Dr. Phineas Bartlett, the first physician in Ashfield. He married "Sue." At that time slaves were uncertain property. Peter asked Sue's master what he would take for her, and received this reply: "You can take her and pay me what you have a mind to; something to answer the law." So Peter took her and paid two coppers. In a short time they ran away and followed Dr. Bartlett to Ashfield, living there in a cabin. Sue was a good cook and a great scold. She would say of Peter, "Poor cretur, without a head." When soundly berated, Peter would sometimes retaliate, saying, "I didn't give but two coppers for ye, and ye ain't worth that." Peter tilled the lot on the hill which afterwards bore his name, and lived a simple, honest life. When he became old and a town charge he was taken care of for a number of years by a Mr. Stocking, who took his hill lot in payment. This lot being sold

\* Ashfield, Montana, and Ashfield, Australia.



later, the purchaser called it his "Peter," hence "Peter Hill" perpetuates the name of an humble man.

"Apple Valley" was the name given that section by Jonathan Johnson, an early and active member of this association.

The large area known as "Steady Lane" is claimed to have been so called because some of the inhabitants used to meet so steadily to play cards at Capt. Warner's store. Should all steady card players at the present, have such a name bestowed on the scene of their activities, Steady Lane would be a common, rather than an unusual, designation.

While the substance of the above recital is largely drawn from the Ashfield history, there is one name applied to South Ashfield, of which no printed record can be found. That name is "Tinpot." After searching some years for its origin, application to the town clerk, Mr. Whitney, brought information as follows:

"There seem to be many stories as to the origin of the name 'Tinpot.' Two are:

"Many years ago there was a store near where the present store stands which served as the starting point for many of the old tin peddlers' carts, hence 'Tinpot.' Some versions of this story add 'that the store, as a sign of its business, had a large tin pot hanging over the steps,' so 'Tinpot.'"

Another story of an entirely different character relates that many years ago one particularly rough section of Boston was called Tinpot. One night a travelling salesman from Boston was stopping at the Ashfield Hotel. During the evening a man living in South Ashfield came in and in time became so abusive to the guests that finally the travelling man remarked to him—"You had better go home to Tinpot." The name Tinpot struck the fancy of the natives present and they immediately started calling South Ashfield, Tinpot.

A third account is that the name started as a slur on





the old crockery business located in South Ashfield many years ago. A former Ashfield resident, now living at Turners Falls, tells me that near the store, there was a tinshop where all kinds of tinware was made, and this fact led to the adoption of the name. He also adds that this was the version given by the late G. Stanley Hall. Any one is at liberty to accept or reject these tales at will, but they are what is to be found on the subject.

Now passing over into Buckland we find another "Apple Valley," where, as in Ashfield, the fine fruit there raised suggested the name.

In the earlier days of this town's history, the minister was going horseback—it was before the days of carriages—over into the east part of the town to make a pastoral call. Passing through the hollow near where is now the cemetery, a hog ran out from the bushes, frightening his horse, and he was almost thrown off. In telling of the event the reverend gentleman spoke of the place as "Hog Hollow" and to this day that name has remained, although recently some are terming the place, "Happy Valley," but with no definite reason given for the change. It is said that at one time the Shakers held their meetings in this vicinity.

"Clock Hollow," near the center of the town, acquired its name because clocks were there made; first by Hubbard and Hitchcock, and later by William Sherwin.

The not particularly pleasing name of "Gruntville" is a section of Buckland Lower Street and derived its name from the peculiar habit of an old resident, of grunting whenever he spoke.

"Koon Chaug," the name of an elevation of some 1400 feet west of Buckland Center, is an Indian name meaning "Snow Hill." Its applicability is shown by the fact that in 1877, snow was there found in June in sufficient quantity to enable the people of the town to hold a public sugar eat.

In Colrain are found the names of Catamount and Christian Hill. These names seem to apply more par-





ticularly to ranges of hills than to distinct elevations. On the first named, on or near the old road over the mountain, is a large den supposed to have been formerly the lair of catamounts. Why "Christian Hill" is undetermined. The first flag flown from a public school house was at Catamount in 1812 and a marker now identifies the spot.

In Conway is found "Pumpkin Hollow" where for some years after the town's first settlement was located the chief village. Years ago an effort was made by those who thought the name "unpoetical" to rid the section of its local appellation, and at a "Christening party held by the residents the village received the name 'Church Green,' but modern innovation proved unequal to the task of beating down tradition and thus the older name continued to assert itself." Just what happened to the pumpkins to cause them to once roll from the cultivated slopes down into the hollow and give it the name, the chronicler failed to say; but to such local happenings do the quaint and curiosity-exciting names owe their origin.

It takes no great stretch of imagination to consider the insects responsible in some way for the name "Cricket Hill"; but who would conjecture that the annoyance caused by those insects to early hunters, camping there for the night, would be such a greatly contributing factor as to give the name?

Necessity is the mother of invention, so 'tis said, and William Warren for several years used to get very hungry, before winter, for fresh meat. Now this happened before the days of the broom corn industry, so he devised a broom, made of walnut, which he called his "walnut broom." These he took to Deerfield, where he had no difficulty in exchanging a broom for a pound and a half of pork. Thereupon the region in which he lived was promptly dubbed "Broomshire." In connection with this story it is also told that Warren used to walk from his home in Conway to Deerfield to get a horse and "pung"





to carry his brooms to market, and after delivering them, walked home.

The name "Hardscrabble" sets forth the fact that it took hard scrabbling to make a living on the soil of that section.

Concerning "Shirkshire" there is told this tale in the words of one Captain Childs:

"Old Mr. Sherman happened along as the people were working on the roads and at their request, assisted them a number of hours, hoping thereby to earn and get his dinner. But no one seemed willing (as the service rendered was for the public) to bear the burden alone, they all *shirked* and left him to *shirk* for himself as best he could. Highly indignant at the neglect with which he was treated he left the place in a state of excitement saying, 'Let it be called *Shirkshire* from this day forward' and so it has been and ever will be as long as wood grows and water runs."

It seems almost like "carrying coals to Newcastle" to speak to a Deerfield audience on Deerfield names, but three there are which appear to have proved baffling. Perhaps someone present can explain the origin of the name "Arthur's Seat" located in the northwest corner of the town next the Shelburne line in so-called Wisdom? Or "Behind Noon" applied to the region near the present Kells farm, now in Greenfield, where on January 15, 1800, Jonathan Hoyt sold two lots of land, each containing one and one half acres "in our new city (alias) Behind Noon." And what about "Old World?" Mr. Sheldon refers to these locations but gives no information as to the origin of their names.

About the "Turnip Yard" he has this to say: In Dec., 1753, the town sequestered property about the Sugar Loaf range for a town sheep pasture, choosing a shepherd to have charge of the flock, who was to be paid by the sheep owners, pro rata. According to an old English custom a turnip yard was laid out in connection with this, hence the name.



Of Wisdom it is said that soon after 1800, but before 1820, the Wise family were large property owners there. Now the syllable *Dom* used as a termination, signifies "jurisdiction," or, "property and jurisdiction," so *Wisedom*, which by contraction soon became Wisdom, was not inappropriate as applied to lands owned by the Wise family. This may have been gradually extended to take in adjacent holdings, for it now includes all the section between the Deerfield river and the Shelburne line. When a young man the late Judge Francis M. Thompson taught school in Wisdom, and when he became selectman in Greenfield he gave the name "Wisdom Way" to the road leading thence to Greenfield.

Hawley claims a "Forge Hill" and "Pudding Hollow." There was a rich deposit of iron ore in a hill west of the center of the place. This about 1800 was mined to supply a furnace nearby, thus giving the name "Forge Hill" to the locality. Anent Pudding Hollow there is this: In the early days there was a strife or dare, between two of the good women of the town as to who could make the largest hasty pudding. One succeeded in producing a kettle which contained five pails full, thereby becoming known as the "Pudding Head" of Hawley. The locality in which she lived, near the north part of the place, has ever since been known as Pudding Hollow.

Mr. Herbert C. Parsons gives us the reason for "The Kingdom" or "Satan's Kingdom" in Northfield being so called.

The tradition was that some wag coming out of church, after hearing a sermon in which all the fires of hell were depicted, and seeing a forest fire across the Connecticut, observed that "Satan's Kingdom was burning." About the year 1818 there was a petition for the separation of the present West Northfield from the parent town. This petition did not propose a name for the new town and was refused eventually by the legislature. Mr. Parsons, with characteristic humour, remarks that thus "Massachusetts was possibly saved a town by the





majestic name of Kingdom,” and then he adds “There was no malice in the name, the west side being populated by families held in the highest respect.” He does not mention “Hell’s Kitchen” by which name a tract south of the Kingdom is known. This area is reached by taking the road to the northwest, skirting the north side of the so-called Nelson Pond in the vicinity to the north of Mt. Hermon. The road soon turns to the north and originally extended through a valley—“Hell’s Kitchen” into Vernon. Now it is discontinued the upper part of the way.

Inquiry has brought to light this tale from a Northfield woman, born and living formerly in that section. She says: “The minister was always preaching *hell fire*”—evidently the same minister responsible for the naming of the Kingdom. “Later a fire started in a kitchen in that locality and people called it ‘Hell’s Kitchen.’”

My informant—one interested and posted in Northfield History—writes: “Our old town has many little settlements with purely local names. ‘Happy Hollow,’ a nice little village on the Warwick road, with a large factory where wooden pails were manufactured. ‘Pilfershire’ (you can guess what that name implies) is that section now known as East Northfield \*\*\*\*\* East of the village near Warwick is a tract of land with many cellar holes, which is known as the ‘Deserted Village.’” These last, being purely local, one does not hear of, as of Kingdom and Hell’s Kitchen; nevertheless if not recorded somewhere, they will soon entirely disappear.

Of the “Patten” district in Shelburne, there seem to be two accounts: The one most generally accepted is that the name was bestowed in recognition of the sterling qualities of the residents, their lives being considered a worthy example for others, hence a pattern. By reason of careless speech perhaps, this soon became Patten.\*

The other, that the custom of the pioneer women there

\* The editor has heard the name traced to a fine, or pattern, school in that district.





of wearing a patten was responsible. The patten was a wooden shoe with an iron ring worn under the soles by women as a protection against dampness.

Whately contributes some. "Old Fields," so called, is a piece of fairly level ground; evidently cultivated by the Indians, as many Indian relics have been found there, and they were old, cultivated fields when the town was first settled.

"Mount Esther" or, as it is generally known, Easter is the name applied to a range of hills. The name came from a woman called Easter, a colloquialism for her real name of Esther, who had thereon a sugar camp and dairy. It is said that this hill has always been a famous place for sugar making and grazing. Hopewell, Canterbury, Claverack, Dead Meadow and Old Boy Hills are more or less elusive. Egypt is that section whereon there was for many years a heavy growth of hemlock and pine trees growing both sides of the highway. The overhanging branches, shut out the light, so that at night it was as dark as Egypt.

Christian Lane became so called, it is presumed, because the earliest settler was a staunch old deacon of the old school Christian type whose mouth was always giving pious exhortations even while he dealt out liquor by the jugful, or concocted the beverage of the times, "Philipp," to his ungodly customers. So says Mr. Crafts, Whately's historian.

Greenfield makes it contribution in several instances. There is "Cherry Rum Brook," draining the swamp and thus having its water colored to the hue of the cherry-rum of yore. It crosses the Bernardston road a short distance above Silver Street.

Still further north opposite the Tourists' Camp site used to stand, as long ago as I can remember, a small, nearly square unpainted school house, known as Log Plain school house. All that flat about the original location has always been known as "Log Plain," as one hundred or more years ago it was covered with very large





pinces and the great logs cut from them. The huge stumps were used within my memory for making many of the fences thereabouts.

"Lamp Black Road" is applied to the old road running from Greenfield over Half Way Hill to Bernardston and Northfield, and known by the Bernardston people as the "back road to Greenfield." Formerly at the Griswold farm, located thereon, great quantities of lampblack were made, hence the designation.

In the early days of Turners Falls, not far from 1870, there were many French people from Canada who came to work in the newly established paper mills. Many of them settled together on the hill west of the Connecticut, which fact is responsible for the naming of "Canada Hill."

The late Judge Francis M. Thompson tells us that in that section of the Upper Meadows where is the Gerrett farm, is located what was formerly known as "Flanders," so called because at one time it contained the residence of a man who was more profane "than the army in Flanders," while a little to the northeast opposite the old William Smead place, now burned, were "Irish Plains," for many years famous as the muster ground for the militia. He adds this interesting bit of information: "It was the plain over which Benjamin Hastings and young John Graves fled when attacked by Indians at Country Farms. Hastings declared that it was covered by sweet fern waist high, but that he went over the whole of it."

In 1673, when the General Court made to Pocumtuck (Deerfield) an additional grant of seven miles square, which, says Thompson, "The liberal surveyors made to include Greenfield and Gill territory," among the restrictions was that "a farme of 250 acres be laid out for the Country's use." So a strip eighteen and a half rods wide was set off, stretching from the Connecticut river to the seven mile line, across the north part of the seven miles square, and called the Country Farm. But the name was later applied only to that locality known for



many years as the Country Farms School District, and now the school district there has been discontinued.

In 1812, when the county jail was situated just below the old Union House, south of the R.R. underpass, that area was known as "Charlestown." As the land was then Deerfield territory, it might have well been included under Deerfield names, as could also Cheapside,—so called because the land lying so far out from the center of the parent town was of less value,—likewise Petty's Plain so known since 1714 and named for a former nonresident owner Joseph Petty. This Joseph Petty had an eventful life being taken prisoner at the sack of Deerfield in 1704 and carried to Canada. An interesting letter detailing his escape is in the keeping of this association and is reproduced in Thompson's "History of Greenfield."

On this old Petty's Plain tract is found our present Meridian street, the origin of which name is occasionally the subject of speculation. One has to go no further than the county commissioner's records at the court-house in Greenfield to find the answer.

In May, 1870, the Legislature passed a law requiring stones to be placed for the use of surveyors whereby they were enabled to test their compasses for the magnetic variation of the needle; and the Franklin County Commissioners decided to place a Meridian line on land on Petty's Plain, then owned by George W. Potter. This line was located on Latitude 42°, 34'; Longitude, 72°, 37'. Three stones were set in June, 1871, and the full account of cutting, dimensions, placing of copper plates on them, setting and the obtaining of the range by Meridian transits of the sun and the star Arcturus, the furnishing of two tripod sights, the findings as to the variation of the needle, and the other fourteen places in Massachusetts where such Meridian stones were set, is all embodied in the report of Edward Prevere, Commissioner, and makes interesting reading. Anyone curious to find these stones may easily locate them near the south end of





Meridian street, east side, back from the street, but easily visible when the grass is not too high. Surveyors are supposed to set their instruments by them annually and record their findings at the court-house. The streams of the county bear many quaint and interesting names, but they cannot be here included.

We must remember that when many of these names were given the country was in a more or less unsettled condition and that the people who gave them were inclined to rough jokes and what we might now consider uncouth mannerisms; but there was a certain applicability that caused the names to become permanent. They have always been provocative of curiosity in the present generation, and this collection of old time tales, supplemented somewhat by present day research, has been an effort to gather these explanations so that they might be more easily available to those who might not otherwise know where to look for them.

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## CENTURY-OLD BIRTH CONTROL

### FROM OUR COUNTY

Curiously enough, this region in which were a century ago the homes of big families of English ancestry was during the same period the dwelling place of a man whose writings had a "revolutionary influence on the English birth rate." The book "The Fruits of Philosophy," by the first American physician to write a treatise exclusively devoted to birth control, was published anonymously in New York in 1832; but the second edition, published in Boston the following year, bore the name of its author, Dr. Charles Knowlton.

"Dr. Charles Knowlton was born in 1800 at Templeton, Mass., married in 1821 and graduated at Hanover Medical College in 1824. He began practice in Hawley at 'Poverty Square,' then a thriving village, and moved



to Ashfield in the early thirties. He was a 'free thinker' and was outspoken against the stern theology of the day. He was esteemed a skillful physician and had a very large practice": so says the "History of Ashfield."

Keeping many English names out of "Who's Who" did not insure the inclusion of his own in general or medical dictionaries of biography, though J. M. Wheeler's "Biographical Dictionary of Freethinkers"\* devotes a few lines to him. On the contrary, Reverend Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834) appears in biographical dictionaries as an English political economist, author of "Principle of Population"; and our encyclopedias define "malthusianism" as pertaining to his theory that population, unless hindered by checks, tends to increase more rapidly than the means of subsistence. Evidently the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association should perpetuate upon its records the name of an ignored, but influential, son of the Pocumtuck valley or of its ramparts, —the name of Charles Knowlton, M.D., of Ashfield.

A century ago two Americans, Dr. Knowlton and Robert Dale Owen,† were impressed by the malthusian theory and wrote upon birth control, but with an interest in eugenics and racial improvement as well as in the theory of Malthus. The first edition of Mr. Owen's "Moral Physiology" appeared in December, 1830, and this work and Dr. Knowlton's went through many editions, at least nine of each being published in this country before 1850.

Norman E. Himes, a former associate professor of economics and sociology at Clark University and the source of much of the material for this brief paper, says that "The American tracts of Knowlton and Owen were issued in England and quietly circulated for forty years, until the publication of the 'Fruits of Philosophy' was finally vindicated in 1878 in the Court of Queen's Bench. This was the so-called Knowlton trial. There was, how-

\* London, 1889.

† 1801-1877, a native of England.





ever, a minor setback in the successful prosecution of Edward Truelove for the publication of Owen's 'Moral Physiology.' "

That vindication was long after the death of Dr. Knowlton. His life was turbulent, as he was prosecuted in various courts of Massachusetts for his publications, and was persecuted for his religious beliefs, which seem to have been agnostic rather than atheistic.

A new minister was installed in Ashfield in 1833 and considered it his duty to preach a severe sermon against Dr. Knowlton. A highly respected member of the church commented severely upon the sermon, was excommunicated and was later reinstated. Dr. Knowlton wrote in defence of himself a pamphlet, entitled "A History of the Recent Excitement in Ashfield," which may be found in our P.V.M.A. library. The net result seems to have been the dismissal of the minister in 1835; but opinions were in those days worth fighting for, and a little later in the same church two choristers led two choirs singing two tunes at one time, thereby perfectly demonstrating the existing lack of harmony.

After the death of Dr. Charles Knowlton, his son, Dr. Charles L., who had begun the practice of medicine in the town of Worthington, was induced to return to Ashfield. Some eighteen years later he removed to Northampton, though the people of Ashfield desired him to remain with them and circulated a petition that he do so. The doctor considered it a good joke that one of the men most active in the movement was the town undertaker.

But two documents in the handwriting of Dr. Charles Knowlton are known to exist: first, his unsigned doctoral thesis in the library of the Dartmouth Medical School; and, second, his will in the files of the Probate Court for this county. This paper, containing his only remaining autographs, includes his parenthetical comment on the customary phrasing of the time: "In the name of God, Amen. (So says the Form) I, Charles Knowlton of Ashfield . . . ."



The detailed inventory and appraisal of his estate, prepared in 1850, begins with "The homestead of said deceased, situated in said Ashfield, containing one acre, with the buildings thereon \$1,600: Office and lot containing about two acres \$500." The list of personal property should be read with realization that during the last ninety years many things medical have been proved or disproved which were uncertain in the days of Charles Knowlton. Mingled with phials, mortar and pestle, traveling drug case, "old Electerizing Machine," medical pamphlets, surgical instruments, live stock, promissory notes, furniture and furnishings, are these books—among many others: *Moral Physiology* (appraised at ten cents), *Paines Theological Works*, *Facts in Mesmerism*, *Rights of Women*, *Halls Diagnosis*, *Youatts Cattle Doctor*, *Female Education*, *Library of Romance*, *Bachelor and Owens discussion*, *Animal Magnetizer*, *Whites Episcopal Church*, *Cooper on Libel*, *Abercrombie on Brain*, 2 vols. *Phrenology*, *Age of Reason*, *Celebrated Trials*, *Church of Rome*, *Fellows Ancient Mysteries*, *Voltaire Dictionary*, *Dickinsons Testament*, *Free enquirer*, and A lot of old Books, pamphlets and Newspapers.

Perhaps this was a partial inventory of his interests and convictions, to be judged by the knowledge of his period: certainly Charles Knowlton, M.D., of Ashfield, was a student, a fearless man, a champion of the right as he saw it, and a very considerable factor in the decline of the birth rate in England some thirty years after death came to him in the hills of Franklin County.

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## THE HURRICANE FLOOD

BY CHARLES SIDNEY SEVERANCE

Some creature of doom must have looked down from King Philip's rock early in the week of Sept. 19, 1938,





and silently drawn back his lips in a sardonic grin. For from dawn of Tuesday, Sept. 20, to the end of the week, the average citizen of the valley experienced enough destruction to last him a lifetime.

Rain, which had intermittently fallen for two weeks, started to pelt down in earnest during the 19th, accumulating an all-time one day record of 4.34 inches, according to reports kept by officials of the Turners Falls Power and Electric Company. Earth began sliding from the hilltops to the valleys below, covering streambeds, roadways—even railroad tracks.

Near 5 a.m. on Sept. 20, 1938, a westbound special freight train steamed from the East Deerfield railyards. About a third of a mile out, the engine, tender and two freight cars slid off the tracks and down an embankment, killing a fireman and trainman, and fatally injuring the engineer. A fourth crewman sustained injuries.

The cause was directly attributed to the water cascading steadily from broken skies, for on the tracks, where the train started its fall, was found a large deposit of earth.

Then water began to rise in the county rivers, jumping past the 30-foot level in the Deerfield in the afternoon of the 21st. Muddy water from rapidly swelling brooks and rivers closed all traffic on main arteries of travel through the valley that day, but it was still possible to get out through use of high, back roads.

Just after Chairman John W. Haigis of the county committee called out the Red Cross to stand by for any emergency, a freak hurricane bound from the West Indies to Florida, but thrown off its course by a steady warm stream of air blowing south along the Atlantic seaboard, forced itself up the Connecticut River valley from Long Island Sound.

For a period of over an hour, wind travelling as rapidly as 75 miles an hour swirled over the area, snapping the oldest trees like matchsticks, overturning automobiles cruising the still open roads, toppling church





steeple, whipping up flood waters, destroying roofs and causing the greatest excitement and awe the county had seen in more than one hundred and fifty years of history-crammed existence.

And still the ugly, muddy waters in the Connecticut, Deerfield, Green, Millers and the thousand smaller rivers and brooks throughout the valley, continued to rise. The combination of flood water and the hurricane destroyed all communication by land, wire and water between towns throughout thousands of square miles of New England, some of which was not repaired for as long as two weeks.

Farmers, city-dwellers, the state, county, and towns lost untold millions of dollars in roads, highways, buildings, land. To many a Connecticut valley onion and tobacco owner, it meant not only the loss of his entire year's labors, but spelled his permanent, financial ruin.

Indiscriminate washing of land along the Connecticut and Deerfield rivers eliminated top soil from the land, while in other areas it deposited silt considered by farmers to be useless to raise crops for years to come.

It took until Saturday for the citizens and town officials to obtain a coherent picture of just what had happened in the little more than five hours when the hurricane and flood was at its height the evening of Sept. 21. Then it was that Orange selectmen reported to a meeting of all county selectmen held in Greenfield on Saturday afternoon that her damage was at the figure for Orange of \$1,300,000.

In the Orange area, 44 stores were damaged to the extent of \$50,000, a citizen's committee chairman from that town reported. Industrial damage was estimated at \$768,000, since without exception the manufacturing concerns in that town lie along the Millers River. The Millers River has for generations had the reputation of rising more rapidly and farther than any other stream in the area. High water mark was four feet four inches above the 1936 flood.





Other damage at Orange included 341 homes water-soaked or cluttered with fallen trees, for a total of \$350,000. Damage to a second class of homes, numbering 1000, came to \$65,000. Six filling stations were inundated and damage estimates ran as high as \$15,000. \$25,000 was lost through roads and bridges.

As pessimistic a picture of the devastation as any, was presented by Charlemont's selectman, Frank Wells, who said a total of 19 roads were closed for many months to come. Trees, as thick as the forest they once were, cluttered many of these roads, a story that was echoed and re-echoed by the press and officials of every type and description, as well as by ordinary travellers from all parts of the county.

Only half a mile of the many miles of roads in the town of Hawley remained negotiable, Philip L. Stiles, chairman of the selectmen, glumly reported. Twelve bridges were wiped out in that town, he said.

So bad was the bridge situation in Ashfield, a representative from that district reported, that it would be necessary to call on volunteers from that town to put in makeshift bridges. Subsequent events proved that many an Ashfield man and his employees forgot their own serious problems on the farm to turn in and erect more than a dozen log bridges that served Ashfield travellers for several months, until state highway department officials could get construction crews into that area.

Greenfield, a town which has been called the "city of elms"—where for several decades citizens have fought tooth and nail every tree removal—suffered most from tree losses, Charles Fairhurst, chairman of the board of selectmen, reported. During the height of the hurricane, it was impossible to travel either north or south on any local street, I recall.

Charges hurled by an official of the Glassine Company of Monroe Bridge on the Deerfield River mirrored a nearly universal reaction of citizens in that valley that the New England Power Company officials had been up





to some "monkey-shines" at the Whitingham, Vermont, earth dam the afternoon of the hurricane. For many weeks, despite denials and proffered proof, it was stubbornly held by the citizens most injured by the flood that the water had been allowed to go out of the dam that Wednesday afternoon and had added to the havoc created by the torrential stream.

These were some of the highspots of the hurricane and flood as seen by town officials. Each of the particular elements of damage were naturally repeated, almost without number, throughout the valley, and the reactions and particular sidelights were typical of each of the areas involved. The combination of such events plus the personalities and the peculiar geography of each section produced individual tragedies, and comedies as well.

Probably none of the many who are interested in statistics have ever compiled a list of damages sustained privately and it would be foolhardy to attempt an estimate. But the damage done public property, coupled with wild spendthrift allocation of state funds by a politically-minded Democratic governor and a politically-minded Republican legislature brought the total state damages to estimates running as high as \$300,000,000.

The most costly, though not most spectacular damage, was done valley roads and bridges. In Franklin county, a total of 130 bridges were wiped out, including several historic covered spans that had stood for over 100 years. Charlemont reported 35 bridges out, Colrain missed 26, Ashfield lost 20 and Buckland reported 14 gone.

Through it all, the New Englander that inhabits the valley showed courage and patience and a "stiff upper lip" that has been his heritage from the early settlers. So it really was no news at all when Chairman John W. Haigis reported the Red Cross had received not a call for help during the entire period.

Only three persons lost their lives from high water or falling trees, but minor injuries ran well into the thou-





sands and great inconvenience and even hardship was experienced by many thousands living in this fertile valley.

As in all floods, the Boston and Maine railroad company suffered severely. In addition to the water damage, felled trees across tracks in all directions caused tie-up of service. The major trouble, as contrasted with the 1927 flood and the 1936 flood, came not so much on the north and south routes as it did on west and east tracks. Railroads in all directions, to be sure, were closed to all traffic for several days, but almost within a week, service was resumed south from Greenfield and north to Vermont.

Not so on the east and west divisions. There, major rail trestles had been wiped off the face of the earth by roaring Deerfield, Little Chickley and Millers rivers. Trestles were missing at Savoy, Charlemont, Shelburne Falls, Erving, Orange and Athol. So great was the damage that there was talk for some time, which even crept into print, that the cost of replacing these trestles might well send the Boston and Maine careening into bankruptcy. At any rate, construction did not reach a stage where all traffic was resumed, even on limited schedule, for over a month. Workmen were still working the right of ways from this flood as late as the fall of 1939.

The flood waters fell as rapidly as they came. Its damage had been appraised and future havoc from similar causes might be guarded against. But the millions of board feet of felled timber on many an ancestral acre, which had been swept out of life, could not soon be replaced.

There was a concerted cry by the farmers and by county leaders for help, the first because of the financial loss sustained, and the latter because of the tremendous fire hazard the miles of matted trees and undergrowth would become when spring arrived, the snow had gone, and the material had dried. From industries also came cries for help and threats that if help was not given them



they would abandon the county to its own devices. From selectmen, particularly rulers of the hill towns where capital is scarce, came cries and dire prognostications that without financial help the towns would go into bankruptcy.

The answers to these calls were made in a variety of ways and by a variety of agents. One of the first, and most important to many a farmer, was the establishment Dec. 2, 1938, of the Northeastern Timber Salvage administration as part of the U. S. Forestry Service, working in collaboration with the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

This administrative agency, one of whose district headquarters is at present located in Greenfield, bargained with landowners to purchase their fallen timber in three grades, depending on amount of knots present or disease discernible. This timber was trimmed by the landowner, hauled by him to government storing spots where it was cut up by either himself or the government after purchase by the foot.

The government established more than 45 purchasing depots in Franklin county alone, the majority being placed near ponds strategically located throughout the county and the remainder at fields which soon became known as dry storage spots. Here the government contracted with private sawyers, some of them coming from as far as West Virginia, to saw the timber and stack it for sale.

At the wet storage spots, the logs were cut to lengths which could be handled with ease and dumped in the water until some later time when the saw mills could get around to handle them.

By the end of January, 1940, the Northeastern Timber Salvage administration had cleared 114,854 acres of land in this area and was faced with only 114 acres more to clear. Throughout New England, the agency had salvaged 632 million board feet, while private sources accounted for an additional 385 million board feet. The



the following is a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of the President of the United States, and the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of the Vice-President of the United States, for the year 1880.

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government agency has accounted for 66,208,000 board feet in this state alone.

In the fall of 1939, the administration became largely a selling agency for this timber. Presenting problems unique in the history of lumbering—since nowhere else in the history of this country has logging been conducted on such a vast scale—the administration has attempted to market this timber while it was still good. Predominantly of soft woods, the timber has been sold in small amounts, perhaps the average being 10,000,000 board feet, to private corporations of which the New England Box Company at Greenfield is one. The remainder has been contracted for by one Michigan logger.

Proceeds of the sales, which exceeded the total paid by the government for the raw material and labor of conversion, has been or will be divided between the various timber owners who contributed their felled timber.

The second major source of recovery staged for the area was by state and federal grants for highways and bridges. At this writing, the majority of the work has been done on more than 100 roads in Franklin county, including serious washouts on the Mohawk trail in Charlemont and Savoy, the Sunset trail in Ashfield and Conway, and route 2 in Erving and Orange.

Work has been done under the state department alone, the state engineers working in conjunction with the WPA, CCC, and other government agencies.

In addition to the task already accomplished to remedy the damage created by wind and rain, the protests voiced by the area more than a year ago pointed to a serious shortcoming in the mechanical set-up of flood protection. In fact, it showed that such a thing, while talked of for many years, had never been put into practice. As a result, the area is just beginning to see construction of a series of projects theoretically designed to hold flood water within the narrow confines of normal streambeds, by three separate efforts.

The federal government is just beginning to do for



the Connecticut River what the state has largely accomplished for a multitude of smaller streams throughout the area. Dredging of the bottom of the river has been accomplished as far north as Northampton, with the expectation that by deepening the river beds, the entire overall height of the bed itself will be increased and the flow of water may swell so much more without danger of running over the banks.

Such work has also been done by the state on the Green and Millers rivers and in some sections of the Deerfield and in a number of other streambeds.

The second phase of flood control concerns the artificial development of higher river banks, this time by dike. On the Connecticut from Springfield north, the government with huge machinery and large numbers of men is presently engaged in a three-year construction project, started last summer, to build dikes of earth and concrete or both on those river banks which records show most readily overflow.

An offshoot of these two steps is the building of rip-rap; something that has been practiced throughout the area for years, but never on such extended scale as the state contracts and government grants have called for. Rip-rap of small tributary streams along whose borders important roads have been constructed, to an extent which theoretically, at least, should safeguard state highways. The rip-rap includes such diverse ideas as standard rock layers, solid concrete wall construction and gravel-covered earth banks.

The third, and by far most complicated and spectacular, is the construction of reservoirs, to retain millions of gallons of flood water. In this area, there are projected dams at Birch hill in New Hampshire, designated as protection for this part of the Connecticut valley, for Knightsville and Surrey in New Hampshire and for Tully, on the Millers River, designated as protection for the Millers River and the Connecticut valley. These are a few of the many slated for construction throughout the





state on various main arteries of water escape, and tributaries.

On some of them, work was already begun by the end of January, 1940, in others plans had been completed and still others were pipe dreams. All were theoretically designed to afford flood protection in answer to demand of residents.

Construction of all of them may never occur—and mainly because of the terrific fight waged between the states of Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts against the U. S. War department, which has control of the federal end of the project.

This fight, revolving around alleged attempts of the government to establish further control of the rivers and the establishment of government power plants, has little place in this paper because of its very nature. However, because it has held up the flood protection deemed so vital by all those who are intelligently concerned over the area's fate, it should be mentioned. It is as old a fight as any of the people of the central plain of the North American continent have had—namely states rights versus central control.

A brief look at the industrial side of the picture will bring this paper to a close. The most vociferous cries for help following the flood and hurricane came from this element of the life of the valley. By the end of January, 1940, they had not entirely died out, and as I shall attempt to show, there is small prospect of their doing so in the immediate future.

Let us, for the sake of brevity, take but two cases—those of the Greenfield Tap and Die Corporation located in Greenfield and Montague, and the New England Power Company's dam in Wendell. They represent two types of industries, and their fate, to date, has been entirely different.

At Wendell depot, prior to the 1938 flood, there had stood for more than fifty years, a power dam of the New



England Power Company, which supplied in late years as much as 65 per cent of the town's entire tax revenue. In 1938, the Millers River carried this dam away. Faced with the prospect of rebuilding on a site not altogether favorable to the company from the standpoint of their markets, the officials of the power company concluded they would continue nature's destruction and remove the building as well. Thus Wendell in two strokes lost most of its revenue. It is at present desperately cutting appropriations to the bone in an endeavor not to become another of the slowly growing list of Massachusetts towns that has gone bankrupt.

At Greenfield the Green River plant of the Greenfield Tap and Die Corporation is situated directly on the Green River, less than half a mile from the junction of that stream with the Deerfield River, which in turn flows less than another half-mile before uniting with the Connecticut. This plant, the town's oldest industrial structure, including land but excluding its equipment, was worth \$219,500 on the first of January, 1939.

Following the 1938 flood, which was caused like all others at this place by water backing up the Deerfield and Green from the Connecticut, the company reported to its stockholders that the damage was about \$26,000. In thirteen years, from three floods, it had suffered a total damage in excess of \$55,000.

Federal and state governments and their elected representatives were called upon and suggested the idea of dikes to protect the plant, and the property of residents on the other side of Green River. The army appeared to be interested and, after surveys, sent in recommendations; but feeling that the army might be tying and untying red tape for some three years, appeals were made to one financial agent after another. The W.P.A. officials of the state seemed but slightly interested and after several months rejected the entire proposition. Then another combination of forces met in Washington with





higher W.P.A. officials and these evinced somewhat greater interest. As outlined the project would be financed by the W.P.A. and the state, from whom nothing more than a non-committal answer has as yet been obtained.

I have dealt at length with these instances in Greenfield and Wendell because without the industrial plants in this valley a considerable part of its inhabitants would have to move elsewhere seeking employment. It is also true that such industrial efforts for flood protection as those made by the Greenfield company may result in flood protection to areas which would otherwise remain at the mercy of future floods.

Thus, by the end of January, 1940, the valley has not fully recovered from the havoc created in a little more than five hours the evening of Sept. 21, 1938. Physically, it never can completely recover; but with the aid of federal and state governments, much of the havoc is being repaired, and probably, an equally large share of the work has already been done by individuals in the county through their own efforts.

Life in the valley since that dawn of Sept. 20, 1938, decidedly quickened, and almost solely because of a devastating flood and hurricane that swept through the area, its center the heart of the Connecticut valley and its nature such that for a hundred miles east to the ocean, there was a clean sweep of destruction, while less than a mile west, in most sections, only heavy rains and a little wind was experienced.

Terror and awe, excitement and a sense of the novel reigned for two days Sept. 21–23, 1938. During that period, the area experienced a freak hurricane and flood that was very serious, although in many valley areas not reaching the proportions of the 1936 flood. However, the effects of the two, plus the accumulations of the 1936 and 1927 devastations, have caused several new features to appear in this valley.



The permanent effects upon human life in the valley must be considered to be mere scratches on the surface—as a scratch is received on the hand. However, much has been learned from the experience, though the life here goes on as before.

**NOTE:** Seventy-one accounts of the 1938 hurricane are listed in the "Yankee" magazines of September '39 and April '40.





## FORMER PRESIDENTS

George Sheldon, John Sheldon, Jennie M. Arms Sheldon

## FORMER RECORDING SECRETARIES

N. Hitchcock, Margaret Miller, Rev. R. E. Birks, Wm. L. Harris

## FORMER TREASURERS

Nathaniel Hitchcock, John Sheldon, George Arms Sheldon

## OFFICERS FOR 1940

*President*, Francis Nims Thompson, *Court House, Greenfield.*

*Vice Presidents*, Hazel Sheldon Nichols, Edward E. Whiting.

*Recording Secretary*, Margaret Harris Allen.

*Treasurer*, W. Herbert Nichols, *220 Main St., Greenfield.*

*Council*, the above officers and the following:

Frank L. Boyden, Minnie Ellen Hawks, Margaret Miller and Jane Atherton Wright, until February 25, 1941; Helen C. Boyden, John W. Heselton, Lucy Cutler Kellogg and Agnes P. Sheldon, 1942; Jonathan P. Ashley, Ernest E. Coffin, Mary W. Fuller and Margaret C. Whiting, 1943.

## TRUSTEES

*George Sheldon Memorial Fund*: W. Herbert Nichols, 1941; Frank L. Boyden, 1942; Agnes P. Sheldon, 1943.

*Sheldon Publishing Fund*: Hazel Sheldon Nichols, 1941; Jonathan P. Ashley, 1942; Margaret C. Whiting, 1943.

*Old Indian House Homestead*: Margaret Harris Allen, 1942; W. Herbert Nichols, 1946; William L. Harris, 1948.

*Charlotte Alice Baker Fund*: Curators of the Frary House Estate, named below.

*The Permanent Fund*: The Finance Committee, named below.

## COMMITTEES

*Executive*: President, Treasurer and Frank L. Boyden.

*Finance*: J. W. Heselton, Hazel S. Nichols, F. N. Thompson.

*Auditors*: Carlos Allen, Ernest E. Coffin.

## MEMORIAL HALL

Houses the unique *Sheldon Collection* of Colonial, Indian and prehistoric relics, and memorials of dwellers in the Pocumtuck (or Deerfield) valley. In charge of the *Executive Committee*, named above.

## FRARY HOUSE

Gift of C. Alice Baker. The oldest dwelling in this region; containing rare and beautiful furniture and furnishings. Now first open to the public. Margaret Harris Allen, Helen Childs Boyden, W. Herbert Nichols, *Curators of the Frary House Estate.*



# POCUMTUCK VALLEY MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

## REPORT

This is the third of the "annuals" which will constitute Volume IX of our "History and Proceedings." Each contains original matter edited and published in a limited edition under a vote by the corporation.

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We trust that this publication will be welcomed by members of the P.V.M.A., by historical societies and libraries, and by a public interested in the Old Deerfield region.

Respectfully submitted,

FRANCIS NIMS THOMPSON, *President*;  
W. HERBERT NICHOLS, *Treasurer*.

Memorial Hall,  
Deerfield, Mass.





## SEVENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING

1941

The village of Old Deerfield and the twenty-fifth day of February: also "Mr. Sheldon's weather"—the heavens smiling approval upon the continuance of meetings instituted by the historian of Deerfield! *In the Council Room* the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association held its afternoon meeting, and first were read tributes to two former councilors, William Lombard Harris and Henry B. Barton; one paper prepared by a daughter and read by Miss Minnie Ellen Hawks, and the other written by Mrs. Kellogg and read by the subject's friend Judge Thompson.

The records of the 1940 meeting being read and approved, all *officers and councilors were reelected*. The president reported for the executive committee and Mrs. Allen on Frary House. Miss Margaret Randolph Hitchcock of Amherst then presented her study of some persistent characteristics of the Hitchcocks of Deerfield, and the president read a communication by Mrs. Mary Field Fuller concerning the Misses Allen. He also read to an appreciative meeting the account by Mrs. Katherine Holton Cram of the many industries and occupations of Colrain, a town dear to the judge as the birth-place of his father.

*The Council meeting followed and financial reports by the treasurer and five boards of trustees were approved and appointments made.*

*At the town hall* Mrs. Henry C. Wells and an efficient corps of willing helpers prepared and served the something-more-than-supper which our constant friends, the women of Deerfield, had contributed; and again the Glee Club of Deerfield Academy sang for us, under the direction of Mr. Oatley, to whom we are also indebted.



The *speakers of the evening* were Doctors Dole, Atkins and Pratt. Dr. Dole told in a graphic way of the daily life of a little girl on a New England farm, indoors and out, more than seventy years ago. Rev. Dr. Pratt spoke upon the message conveyed by the memorials of Colonial events in our valley, and Rev. Dr. Atkins talked of the character and charm of this region as he first knew it nearly fifty years ago.

The community of interest of village, academy and memorial association was emphasized by President Thompson who said that in the same *town hall* more than seventy such annual meetings of the association had been held; that in the association's "*Frary House*" Deerfield Academy had been organized (April 18, 1797); and that *Memorial Hall* was built (1797) for the academy and purchased (1878) by our association. He urged those having a real interest in Old Deerfield to seek membership in the Memorial Association.

During an unavoidable delay in printing these addresses Doctor Mary P. Dole published her book "*A Doctor in Homespun*," which included with much else her most interesting talk to our association and prevented its inclusion here; but made it possible for everyone to possess a bit of the essence of New England—the story of a period and of a brave busy life told in pithy pungent phrases.

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## REPORT BY THE PRESIDENT

History making in the eastern hemisphere has deeply overshadowed all other present events; yet 2,349 persons visited the Sheldon Collection in our hall last season. Only 16 in March and 42 in April; but 157 in May, 267 in June, 522 in July, 865 in August, 277 in September and 203 in October. The visitors came from 37 states and 5 foreign countries. I greatly enjoyed exhibiting Memorial Hall and Frary House to a large group of





English children and to the Northfield Historical Society.

Among donations were a stone axe-head found by Houghton Thorne on the west side of Deerfield river, given by Walter Thorne; Elijah Harmon's civil war gun, given by his son and daughter; the Unitarian service flag, with gold star for Tom Ashley, and world war service roll of honor; the trunk of Adoniram Judson who went in 1813 to Burma, as a Baptist missionary—this presented by Rev. D. H. Strong of Buckland. Embroidered and other clothing of civil war days were presented by Hope E. Cushman. Among books received was the Stebbins genealogy from Willis M. Stebbins.

Your executive committee has done nothing more radical than to trim some trees west of Memorial Hall and remove a cankered elm near others and the fence. An important discovery has been some 25 sets of the History of Deerfield, after Mrs. Biddle had reported the edition exhausted a year ago.

A survey of historical records, being carried on under direction of Mr. William S. Piper as a part of the program of the Works Project Administration has examined and listed some 10,000 items of our collection of an estimated 25,000. Through the cooperation of town officials this has been done at the town office building. The expense has been merely for supplies, and the result will be a comprehensive listing of the collection—"of exceptional value and interest" accumulated through the years by the intelligent industry of the Sheldons.

We will have to place the collection in holders, arranged in more systematic order than was possible during the gathering, so that this unique source material may be more readily available to investigators. There is much information here concerning the old families of Deerfield.

Our fireproof wing should be the repository of the irreplaceable documentary evidence of the history, genealogy and biography of this region. One who has gath-



ered such material and failed to either publish it or place it (or a copy) in Memorial Hall has failed to take the most essential step toward its preservation.

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## REPORT BY THE CURATORS OF FRARY HOUSE

BY MARGARET HARRIS ALLEN

As is shown by our financial report, the South Wing, downstairs, was made habitable, with fresh paint and paper, a bathroom, oil burner and electricity, in the spring of 1941.

Frery House was cleaned and made ready for exhibition. The collection of china and glass in the Benedict Arnold cupboard has been protected by a glass door, and lighted. A glass protects the pewter over the dining room fireplace; and by means of a gate and fence, the pewter in the yellow room has been safeguarded. A great deal of money could be spent putting each room and its contents in its best possible condition, but, until our income is much larger, we feel that this is impossible. We have tried to accomplish all that we could without added expense.

The house was opened the 13th of May to the guests of Spring Day. On June 22nd, all the people of Deerfield were invited to visit Frery House as our guests. Over 100 people responded.

The house was opened to the public the first of June, with Mrs. Bertha Arms of South Deerfield as Caretaker. Frery House is open from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. Tuesdays through Saturdays; closed Mondays, and open Sundays from 1 P.M. to 6 P.M.

The last of July a sign was put up west of the house. This was made from an old wide board found in the shed attic of Frery House, and hung from one of Mr. Con Kelley's graceful brackets.





In several of the rooms have been placed "Hostess Cards" which give some of the interesting stories about each room.

It seemed advisable to do some advertising. Fifty descriptive cards were prepared and sent to well-known taverns and inns to be posted. We also had printed 1,000 postcards which were given to our guests to send to their friends.

This advertising was released about August 1st, and our increase in admissions after that date seems to have justified the added expense. Our guest register for our first season contains 1,995 names.

We are greatly indebted to many people for help of various kinds in preparing Frary House for exhibition, and for getting out our advertising. To these generous friends we wish to express our appreciation.

There are many things waiting for our attention; we have tried to take care of the most important ones first. We hope that as the years go by we shall be able to make Frary House an even finer example of the home of the early New England settler.

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## WILLIAM LOMBARD HARRIS

August 5, 1863—January 30, 1941

BY MARGARET HARRIS ALLEN

William Lombard Harris was born August 5th, 1863 at the home at "The Bars." His father, William D. Harris, came from Vermont; his mother was formerly Harriet Augusta Lombard of Warren, Massachusetts.

When he was about four, he moved with his parents to Chicago where his father was in business for several years. The Chicago fire occurred during this period. My father remembered being hurriedly awakened and dressed. A shift of wind, however, sent the fire in another direction, so the Chicago home was spared. We



have what is evidently a small boy's theme on the subject of the Chicago fire. Neat, stiff handwriting tells us that "the fire made about 70,000 people objects of Charity for a whole winter!"

He attended school in Chicago, and after the family's return to Deerfield, went to a little schoolhouse which stood near the present stone Pumphouse at "The Bars," where one of his teachers was the late Miss Frances S. Allen. Later he attended Deerfield Academy. In 1879, with Robert Fuller, he entered Nichols Academy in Dudley, Massachusetts, where he spent at least two years. Mr. and Mrs. Barker, former Heads of the old Deerfield Academy, were principals at Dudley. Skiing and snowshoeing were unknown sports; but the boys of those days did a great deal of skating, and had very good times.

I am not just sure when my father began the study of the violin, but it must have been in the early 80's. He studied with Podjorski of Northampton, and spent two winters in Washington, D. C. with an uncle, where he continued his studies and played in an orchestra. In 1885, back in Deerfield, we know that he had several pupils. He kept up his violin for many years. As a child, I can remember going to sleep by the music of the violin and piano which my father and mother played.

In the 80's and 90's the chief farm crop was tobacco; butter was made two or three times a week, carried to Greenfield and sold to the Mansion House. Many references are found in old letters to driving sheep to pasture and shearing sheep. However, in the later years, the main industry was dairying.

There was a great deal of sociability in those days. It was considered of no moment to hitch up a horse to drive to "the Street" for calls or Church services. Visits to the Vermont homestead at Windham and the one at Warren were frequent and generally accomplished with the horse and buggy.

Father's only brother, Julian Chapin, was born in





1885. The death of his mother, seven months later, was a tragic blow to my father. During his stay at Dudley and his winters in Washington, he and his mother exchanged letters with great regularity. When he was home, they often rode together, or spent the evening playing duets; and when his mother went, his whole world seemed to have come to an end.

In March, 1887, he married Mary Jackson Stebbins, daughter of John H. and Mary E. Stebbins of Deerfield. For four years they lived at Bernardston. In 1891, however, owing to the poor health of his father, he returned to Deerfield to carry on the farm which became his home for the next fifty years. He loved the old farm and the country manner of life. He was fond of all animals, and became greatly attached to his driving horses. Later, his team was replaced with a truck, but up to last Fall, he made a round of the farm buildings every evening and ended up with a look at the horse stable to make sure his horses were comfortable for the night. All dogs and cats he considered his friends. But not hens!

He was fond of shrubs and flowers, especially roses. Six pink azaleas which he carefully transplanted 35 years ago still brighten the garden every May.

He served on the Deerfield Board of Selectmen from 1904 to 1917, and for 30 years on the Board of Water Commissioners in the Water System, of which he was one of the organizers, and Treasurer. In 1899 he became a member of the P.V.M.A. and served as Recording Secretary from 1916 to 1938. He was a member of the First Congregational Church of Deerfield, serving that body first as member of the Executive Committee and then as a Trustee.

The Old Deerfield Cemetery Association, the Village Improvement Association and the progress of the Deerfield schools also claimed his interest. He made many sacrifices that his children might have an education.

Although he was always interested in the public affairs of the day, it was very easy to switch his attention



to the past where his memory of dates, people and events was very keen. From the great fire in Chicago he could take you through his struggles in the blizzard of 1888 as he made his way home from Greenfield, guided by the tip of an occasional fence post after he had left his exhausted horse in some friendly barn.

With my mother he long ago became interested in tracing the family genealogy, visiting old cemeteries, and corresponding with numerous town clerks.

I like best to think of him, not as a member of this and that, but as a kindly, friendly man. In this busy, hurried world, we should pause to remember the men and women who faithfully and loyally carry their simple daily tasks to the end.

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## HENRY B. BARTON

May 21, 1853—September 9, 1940

BY LUCY CUTLER KELLOGG

When a man like the late Henry B. Barton passes on, one naturally stops to consider what were the forces in nature, by way of ancestry and environment, which tended to produce and develop the characteristics he displayed throughout his life of eighty-seven years.

The surname of Barton first appears in New England history among the early Puritan settlers at Salem; and one, Edward, is the first mentioned. The name itself is thought to be derived from the old English Bar (defense) and ton (town) and thus signifies the "Defense" or "Defender of the town." The early generations of Bartons in New England led a pioneer life, hence as good citizens carried on the significance of their name. Those of succeeding generations, as I knew them through ancestral connection, fulfilled that tradition under ever changing civic conditions, for as time went on, the need of defense of the town was merged into defense of its in-





stitutions, civic and business privileges, and their promotion.

The first Edward pioneered in Salem about 1640, then successively in Marblehead, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Cape Porpoise, Maine, now Kennebunkport.

His son Matthew was in all these towns pursuing the trade of a "ship-wright" and following the sea, while *his* son Samuel of the third generation eventually became one of the early settlers of the Plantation of Framingham. On the day he sold his Framingham possessions in 1716, he bought at Oxford one thirtieth of the English settlement there—the site of the earlier Huguenot settlement—thus becoming one of the thirty landed proprietors of Oxford village. Through his eighth child, Lieutenant Jedidiah, and then two successive generations bearing the name of Isaac, do we come to that ancestor of Henry Barton, Isaac Barton of the sixth generation who came to this immediate section, living in Bernardston, Leyden and Greenfield and at some time, for a short period, in New Salem.

Isaac's son Benjamin about 1826 purchased the well-known Barton Farm at Riverside-Gill, which later was owned by Bradford, son of Benjamin, and from him came into possession of Henry B. Barton.

The latter was born in the house now known as the Old Red House Tea Room, on the French King highway, on May 21, 1853, one of the children of Bradford B. and Mary (Frost) Barton. Both parents died in his youth and he went to live with his bachelor uncle, Leonard Barton, in the house which was nearly ever after his home and which was built the year of his birth, 1853.

His early public school education was supplemented by attendance in 1866–67 at Powers Institute, Bernardston, which was then considered the educational center of Franklin County. In early life he began to fulfill the ancestral traditions of public service and became a member of the Gill school committee. Not long after, there



applied for a position as teacher in Riverside, one Emma L., daughter of Lucius M. and Laura (Newton) Weatherhed of Bernardston. She was successful in her quest, and the acquaintance then formed culminated in their marriage on May 1, 1881. This union was terminated fifty-nine years later by the death of Henry Barton on September nine, nineteen hundred and forty. In their early married life a short time was spent in Springfield and Greenfield, but soon they returned to their Riverside home.

Mr. Barton held one of the longest records for public service in the county, filling the position of clerk and treasurer for the town of Gill forty-three consecutive years; retiring therefrom in 1933 when he reached the age of eighty years. He it was who gathered the Vital Statistics of the town from public and family records, churches and cemeteries, and which are now to be found in published form in all the libraries in the state, and beyond.

He served as selectman and assessor, and in 1908 as a member of the house of representatives in Boston. He was long on the board of Trustees of the Crocker Institution for Savings at Turners Falls, and on that of the Franklin County Agricultural Society. Of the latter he was a member over sixty-five years, joining in the time when a pass for life to the fairs was issued to all members as they joined; a policy which nearly wrecked the society in later years.

His club life was represented by membership in the Guiding Star Grange in Greenfield, and the Connecticut Valley Pomona Grange; being a past master of the latter. He was a charter member of the Home Aid Society of Gill, later known as the Riverside Community Club, and for many years a member of the Senior Club of Bernardston, the meetings of which he rarely missed, even when infirmity overtook him. He attended for the last time the one held the July prior to his decease, and acted as presiding officer.





His life work however centered on the home farm, and in the 1870s and 1880s surely, he with his uncle Leonard, brought to perfection the raising of watermelons, muskmelons and cantaloupes, all of which found a ready market and were noted as most luscious products.

His town and county history strongly appealed to him. He had a marvelous memory to the last, and accurately recalled the events of his youth and the many stories he then heard. His keen, analytical mind was recognized as an infallible source of knowledge by those who called upon him for information or confirmation concerning obscure historical items. Naturally all this led him to become interested in the work of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association and he became a member in 1907. Two years later he was honored by election as one of the Councillors, which office he held for nine consecutive years.

His own family records went back to the Isaac of the sixth generation, and he took a great interest and pleasure in these and in his Barton family history. When he found that the records of the earlier generations had been compiled and published in 1930 in a well known historical quarterly, he lost no time in securing that copy; which he was always glad to share with others of the family, that they in turn might become better acquainted with the lives of their forebears.

Quiet, unassuming in manner, genial and hospitable, enjoying the society of his friends, he played his part well in the drama of life and left to his wife, son and granddaughter, many treasured memories; while the community life—social, civic, and business—which he had helped to build and enrich was left the poorer by the passing of an unusual personality.



## "SOME PERSISTENT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HITCHCOCKS OF DEERFIELD"

BY MARGARET RANDOLPH HITCHCOCK

There are several traits which have definitely appeared in four generations of a family, which for two of the generations was an almost completely Deerfield family. I refer to the Hitchcocks. The traits I want to trace—and I am only picking out two—as greatly influencing their lives are, first, a most definite scientific trend, and secondly, an interest in and a pleasant talent for producing music.

The first Hitchcock to live in Deerfield was Justin. In his year book he tells of his moving from Springfield to Deerfield—by degrees, as it were, for he came first in February 1774 for a month, then in November, and finally moved there permanently in May 1775, because "at Springfield it cost me too much." Here in Deerfield he immediately became the "fifer" of the Company of Minute Men as he had been in Springfield.

Also in the year 1775 he says, "I began to teach a singing school in Deerfield the town and church were unhappily divided and I was rather bashful and diffident but I succeeded so as to get the singing considerably revived which had almost run out before. . . ." He was sometimes hired, and sometimes did this gratis. He "had composed several Pieces of Music some of which I introduced into the school and were sung in Public Worship they were chiefly fusing tunes as such music was much in use about this time Mankind are rarely content with a medium in any thing when I learned music the slow tunes were all we sung and a fusing tune would drive people out of the meeting house about this time fusing tunes in the Allegro movement were chiefly in use and people appeared to be pleased with them—tho, some thought them too light and airy."





He also made two instruments which were crosses between bass viols and cellos. These have been played by his descendants, as well as by him, and are now safe; one in Memorial Hall, and the other in the Hitchcock Memorial Room at Amherst College. In a letter of advice addressed to "Dear Henry" we find this bit— . . . "As you have never resided anywhere but in this town you will no doubt miss the Society you leave and will feel dull and heavy on this account—but you will be careful of taking measures to divert your mind which are hurtful to your Character or interest—one way to divert you is attention to business in the proper hours for it in leisure hours I would recommend reading Music and the Company of respectable people. . . ." "His ruling passion stayed with him till death, for as he was dying he sang 'Winsor.' "

He was a hatter by trade and poor and struggling, but all through his year book he shows the exactness of observation which characterizes his sons and grandchildren; and he was meticulous in this, noting the date when possible and all details whether he was describing the "comet" when he was in Springfield, the "Darkness" of May 1780, the Canker Worms beginning to be noted in 1786 with their eventual destruction by frost in 1794 and the big apple crop the following year, the hurricane in 1788, or just the exact condition of his thumb when it was "put out of joint." He was not interested in the pain or inconvenience of this, but in the looks and the various steps in its healing. In a group of odd manuscripts or journals of Justin's we find this: "Thoughts on the causes of rain and remarks of the winds and weather." This is eight pages on the cause of rain and the progress of storms across the United States. He describes the storms he has seen, and when he cannot draw on his own experiences he draws on Dr. Franklin's. . . . "I saw a cloud moving from southwest to northeast it appeared to be considerably north of west of me and it was clear sky north of it and also south of it the motion



was very slow and there was no wind—after I observed it sometime I perceived some streaks of rain falling from it which continued to increase untill the Sky beyond the cloud was all hid in a thick dark cloud and the rain fell in torrents untill the ground was all covered and ran in brooks—the cloud moved away or disappeared slowly without any wind through the whole—. . . .”

He married a Deerfield girl, Mercy Hoit. The part of his letter to “Mr. David and Mrs. Silence Hoit” proposing for their daughter, which we have left, has been quoted by Mr. Sheldon, I am sure, but I am equally sure that his “dream” has never been used here. This is a folder of four full sized pages written on both sides, and starts out “To Miss Mercy Hoit. You will not suppose that I really ever Dreamt that I have wrote here but that I have endeavoured in some measure to shew the continual Trouble Difficulty perplexity and anxiety we meet with in Dreams, you will if you are critical observe some contradiction between the Second and thirtieth Verses in the first of these I represented the stream gently Descending in the latter swiftly running but you must consider that we was not all while at one place in the river sometimes up the stream and sometimes Down in which way this contradiction may be accounted for.”

“Twas thus I fancied in my Dream  
That you and I my friend  
Was walking by a pleasant stream  
What gently did Descend

. . . .

But new perplexity of mind  
The way we did not know  
With anxious care we sought to find  
The way that we should go

. . . . The forked lightning now appears  
And did around us shine  
Then I confessed great was my fears  
And yours exceeded mine.”





They have a most dreadful time with monsters and storms and he awakes after this.

“His dreadful mouth he opend wide  
Prepared to Devour  
All hopes of life I laid aside  
Being wholly in his power.”

“In this distress I awoke and found my arm twisted around under my head which caused me extreme pain.” Maybe this is a love letter, but he still notices that when he awoke, his arm was twisted.

They had a family of five, three sons and two daughters, all of whom were born in the house he built. This house, on the lane,\* he had built himself, having made the brick and laid in stone and lumber one year, gotten married when the lower floor was finished the next year, and finished the house gradually as they lived in it and more room was needed.

Of the next generation we again have interesting recollections. Of the girls I know little; one was the loved “Aunt Billings” of Conway who was a “great talker,” according to her nephew, Edward, and the other, Charissa, must have been a charmer, as the bachelors of Deerfield gave her a wedding present when she married “Dr. Jonathan Swett of Norway in the District of Maine.”

The boys, however, are close friends of ours, for Edward, of the third generation, left his reminiscences of them all and of visiting those who lived in Deerfield. Henry, the elder brother, lived in the old house, and it was a neat, pleasant house, with a pleasant family life. The girls of that family were near the age of the remiscer, so that to him life there was more for his sisters, not for a boy. In it was the usual love of music and good conversation which we find in all the homes, and strict ideas of honesty and integrity in all matters was an integral part of it. There was much discussion of the matters

\* The middle lane, “Hitchcock Lane”—the Albany road.



of the church and education; the Unitarians were "way off," and college education not necessary.

Charles, the middle brother, was the uncle who is most lovingly described in these unpublished reminiscences of his nephew. He again was struggling, living almost in poverty like his father; but he had a singing school, led the singing in church, played the bass viol, and encouraged his children and nephews and nieces in accurate observations by a form of game or conversation while they were working around the place. His house\* was next door to his brother's, the "other house"; he had bought it from his mother's family, and the two houses shared the same well for stock, and life was very close and harmonious in the memory of a small boy.

This boy was so impressed with his visits here that in 1902 at the age of seventy-four, when writing these reminiscences, he describes the kitchen of Uncle Charles' house in such an accurate, vivid and complete fashion that one could reconstruct it from his description, red walls, "tuckaway bed" and all. This kitchen must have been the one comfortable room in the house and was used for everything; for the parlor was used only once or twice a year, and the small bed room downstairs, though it had a fireplace, was "so cold that if I had not had a feather bed I would have frozen." Cold or not, this house and the visits to it were "Elysium" to the boy.

The youngest of these three boys was the one we know most about, both because of his scientific attainments and positions, and also because there are extant and available more of his writings and journals. He was Edward Hitchcock, the geologist, preacher, teacher, and president of Amherst College. There is a charming letter written to him by his sister Emilia ("Aunt Billings") when he was in New Haven in 1819 for a short time, telling him all the news of Deerfield (and of Miss White in Amherst) and calls him "a Divine a Mineralo-

\* "The little brown house on the Albany road."





gist a Botanist a Chemist an Astronomer and a Master of Arts."

As a scientist he is so well known that it is not necessary to mention the fact, but may I call attention to one point in connection with this, that he was a big enough man and scientist so that when it began to seem probable to him that his beloved "bird tracks" were the tracks of some amphibian or reptilian creature, he could draw the attention of the scientific world to that new decision, though it meant throwing out all his published arguments on the animals that had made these tracks.

His home was the most cultured and comfortable of the homes of the three brothers, though to us now it would seem rather Spartan in some ways. It was larger, better heated, and with much company coming and going—company of all sorts, from the farmer, bringing the load of hay down from Deerfield, to visiting scholars and trustees of the college. Here the children were taught singing from the singing book he had brought down from Deerfield, quite a modern up-to-date book, published in 1818 and called,—

"The Deerfield Collection of sacred music

Compiled from the most approved authors, ancient and modern, with a view to that simplicity, which is indispensable, and that variety, which is important in the services of the church, classed according to their, affinities of expression:

together with a Musical Grammar:

Containing the necessary definitions, and a variety of remarks and directions, relative to pronunciation, adaptation, and expression;

to all of which is added an Appendix,

containing a few set pieces, and a number of occasional and other hymns, more studiously adjusted than usual, to the measure of the music:

by Samuel Willard  
minister of Deerfield"



He himself had learned his music from the book his father had copied, simply called "The Rules of Singing." In addition to this, the children were all taught or encouraged to play any instrument they could find to play; notably, the piano, flute, and cello. Meanwhile, in his spare moments he composed words and music, or set words he wrote to known music for the students to sing at chapel, church, or commencements.

The next, or third, generation is going to be treated unfairly, for I do not know enough about the Billings cousins or the Swetts to say anything about them, and the Deerfield cousins are all held in your memories better than in mine. To you, Deacon Nat, and Cousin Harriet are people; to me, shadows and names, people I wish I had known really. For this reason, the Amherst branch of the family is the one to be described.

President Edward Hitchcock, Edward the First in the family, had six children who lived to man and womanhood; four girls and two boys. They had been brought up in Amherst and taught, as naturally as they breathed, a love of music and a love and knowledge of scientific things. In this family the girls kept up with the boys in class work, most definitely, in fact ahead of them mostly. They, the girls, all went to Miss Lyon's new school; she had lived in their house for a year before starting the seminary, and taught them all, boys and girls, Latin and spelling.

The gifts in the scientific line were spread thickly, in the musical line not so spread out, but bunchily bestowed. In science Mary, Catherine (or Kate), Jane (or Jennie), Edward and Emily were botanists, Jennie and Emily particularly good ones; Kate had small time to carry on that interest, and with Edward it was subordinate to other interests. Then Charles was a geologist as well as a minister, and Edward a doctor, geologist, and anthropologist. Charles, above all things a geologist, studied and taught geology, teaching for forty years at Dartmouth, and was head of several state surveys at dif-





ferent times. With him for many years lived his sister Mary, and her botanical collections in the main are owned by Dartmouth College. Edward also taught all his life, first at Williston Seminary, where he taught all of the sciences, and then at Amherst where he taught physical education and comparative anatomy, making his greatest contribution in the form of his anthropometric studies.

Kate and Jennie were held down in their botanical work by their families, particularly Kate, who had four children; but Emily, who was widowed early, turned to botany more and more. Her collections are still at Smith College. Any one of this family knew a lot about the pet sciences of the rest, and discussions must have been and indeed were, hot; the real authorities and referees of these must have been the mother and father who were recognized authorities in their fields, and they must often have had to quiet even their fairly adult children.

Musically Edward was the most gifted. He could play the piano, the bass viol or cello, the flute, and the organ (he acted as college organist in his youth) and had a very pleasant tenor voice. This last made him much desired by the various groups who sang oratorios around here, and he continued to do this till the 1900's. His great interest in and encouragement of music in Amherst College was the background for the present music department. In bringing Mr. Bigelow back to the German department he felt that getting him on the faculty would be the starting wedge towards introducing a department of music. Of the sisters, Mary and Emily both played the piano—Emily very well—and they all sang.

The fourth generation is also treated unfairly, for I can only take up the grandchildren of the first Edward. Kate married Henry M. Storrs, a minister, and had four children, three boys and a girl, three of whom grew up. This group did not show much interest in scientific things but were all musical, and were in fact so musical that their mother settled in Germany with them for sev-



eral years that their musical studies might continue. Charles' daughters have all been teachers of sciences, chemistry, physics, and botany, but I have no recollection of any musical ability among them.

Edward's family definitely have carried on both traits; of the seven who grew up, five have made something connected with science their life work, while, again, five had some talent musically. They could hardly help a scientific trend, for it was so much a part of their daily lives. When they took a walk they learned geology and botany from their father; to them it was the usual and natural thing to learn the botanical name of a plant as well as its common one, and to make collections of rocks and minerals and have herbariums. When they went to the shore for the summer they made their collections of shells and sea weeds and border life, and these were all arranged and named in true museum style. In the same way, music was part of their lives; they had a chorus in the family and with a cello, piano, violin, and flute probably had some interesting accompaniments.

Edward, the eldest (this is the third Edward in a row), played the piano, sang very well, and became a doctor. Caroline has taught science for over fifty years in one city, Meriden, Connecticut. Lucy was the artist of the family and had no science at all in her (of course she also had to learn her flowers and rocks and minerals), but she did play the piano very pleasantly. Charles was again no scientist, though a great lover of all growing things and a student of nature, and surely no one in the valley knew more hiding places of plants and animals than he did. He played the cello in his youth, as well as the piano, and bought from his great uncle Charles the cello which his father had borrowed and kept for many years. The five dollars paid for it represented a long hard amount of work for the boy.

Jane Elizabeth, one of the first workers at the Henry Street Settlement in New York and a leader in public health nursing, developed many of the set-ups and serv-





ices which are now in use, and which we take for granted. The next time the district nurse is seen on her rounds, notice the bag she carries; it is the one designed by Jane Elizabeth for her Henry Street nurses. When the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company wanted to put in a nursing service, they called on Jane Elizabeth to plan and inaugurate it. She has given courses in many of the hospitals in and around New York City on Public Health Nursing, and has acted as advisor to many of the nursing settlements in cities and in the rural districts.

John and Albert are the irritating ones; they could play anything they wanted to, piano, violin and flute, and John the banjo (even a funeral march sounded funereal on the banjo when he played it) and sing accurately and pleasantly in choruses and quartets. When John was sick for a year before his death, his greatest pleasure came when he could lie in bed and play his flute. At the same time John was a doctor, and Albert an engineer.

The present generation is not quite so talented as the preceding ones, though it is amazing how the same loves of science and music pop up. I believe that there is only one of Charles Hitchcock's grandchildren alive, and I don't know her, and that there are no Storrs left; so there are not many of us. Edward, the oldest of Edward the Second's grandchildren is able to play at any instrument, and further shows his love for music in that he married an opera singer. Katherine has her talents hidden from me; her musical interest is always there, but so far as I know she plays no instrument at all, and is not interested in Science. Her oldest child, however, is taking up the new science of Photography professionally. Margaret trained for a geologist, and has taught various other sciences, and John is a civil engineer, and like his father, music "comes easy" for him.

As I said at the beginning, I only wanted to trace two traits. Perhaps you will quarrel with me at my choice and say that there are others, more strongly developed



and more interesting; I will admit that two or three extremely strong characteristics are, first the humanitarian turn of mind and interest, secondly, a strong religious interest and belief, and thirdly, a hypochondriacism; and that these can be traced throughout the family; but I have found the two I chose the most interesting. Some day it would be interesting to trace outstanding interests in other Deerfield families, for, while I feel that the Hitchcocks are a remarkably definite and colorful family (being one of them), I have never noticed any lack of these characteristics in other Deerfield families. Could it be the water, or the location that makes us all so "full of character"?

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### THE MISSES ALLEN

Frances Stebbins Allen: Aug. 10, 1854—Feb. 14, 1941

Mary Electa Allen: May 14, 1858—Feb. 18, 1941

BY MARY FIELD FULLER

Very recently Deerfield has lost two of her finest as well as her oldest inhabitants, Frances and Mary Allen. Just four days after Frances, her life-long companion and her constant care for many years, Mary died—her work was done. It had been her fervent prayer that she might not go before Frances, who had become not only wholly deaf but also blind; the only means of communicating with her being by spelling words on an alphabet painted very black on a white glove on her left hand. Frances had soon learned the location of these letters, beginning with the fingertips, then joints of the fingers, and the hand, and downward to the wrist. It was a slow arduous task, yet Mary not only read to her, in this way, the vital news of the day, the progress of the war, news of their friends and their letters; but she read also selected and simplified parts of books and articles and poems. Frances had a marvelous memory and would





soothe her wakeful night hours by repeating poems. She had difficulty in learning Braille but was mastering it. She was wonderfully quick to recognize her friends by touch and to understand what they were trying to spell out, often jumping at their meaning at once.

Both Frances and Mary were women of unusual intelligence and ability. They had great love of nature and all things beautiful, and appreciation for the best in literature, art, and music. They were descended from many of the very oldest settlers of Deerfield, from Stebbinses, Hawks, Dickinsons, Bardwells, and many others, some of whom were captured in the 1704 raid and members of their families killed. The lovely, old house where they lived was a direct inheritance from Thomas Bardwell, who bought it in 1722 from Hannah Beaman, Deerfield's first schoolmistress. Frances and Mary were born and grew up in the old Allen Homestead in Wapping. They attended the Westfield Normal School and were members of a class famous for its accomplished and unusual graduates.

Fanny taught a little school at The Bars, a mile across the meadows, that she loved, from her home. One of her pupils still remembers her as a very pretty girl with a cluster of bright brown curls at her neck and a lovely fair skin. A gentle teacher, even in her fine discipline nothing ever escaped her keen vigilance. She taught also in Whitinsville.

Mary taught French in the old Academy. My first memory of her is as a tall, slender, exquisitely refined girl of nineteen or twenty, standing before our French class in the little room over the front door of Memorial Hall, then called the "Science Room" in 1877. Next I recall her at a party in their cosy, low-ceiled parlor at Wapping, playing accompaniment for her brother Caleb's cornet.

Very early in their young womanhood both became deaf, cutting them off from so much they loved—the songs of birds, the voices of little children, the conversa-



tion of their friends. To the end of their lives they were eagerly interested in all that concerned their family and their friends; they kept complete knowledge of all that was happening in the world.

Both were women of rare intelligence; they were kindly and keen in their judgment and seldom wrong.

After they became deaf they turned to photography, at first as a means of expressing their strong love of beauty. They soon became very skillful and their Deerfield landscapes, chosen with real love of their subjects and true artistic insight, were sought for. They were called upon to illustrate books and articles. Their portrait work attracted many interesting people to sit for them. They established a large and successful business in a quiet, dignified way, and they developed ways of their own that made them well known and greatly admired by other photographers for their original and beautiful effects. Mr. Boyden has been so fortunate as to acquire a complete set of their pictures for the Academy.

Both Frances and Mary had decided literary gifts but were too modest to show their work. A lovely poem of Frances, "Bloodroot," is all we know of their writings. Fanny was an ardent and skillful gardener. It was said of her that she might plant things upside down and they would grow. She planted daffodils along the borders and paths of their place in such profusion that the spot became noted for its beauty in early May. Under the south windows of the house she planted lovely primroses in great varieties, lilies of the valley, violets, and hyacinths, and she loved to linger there even when she could no longer see, sometimes kneeling beside them for their fragrance.

Loyal, devoted friends they were; helpful, loving Aunts to many nieces and nephews.





## INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS OF COLRAIN

BY KATHERINE HOLTON CRAM

When Boston Township, No. 2, was thrown open for settlement in 1738 and fifty lots were laid out for sale, it was no accident that they were all bought by Scotch Irish Presbyterians. Many of these people were of the exodus from Ireland in 1720, some were their children, and others came later. Some had lived in Londonderry, N. H., and neighboring towns, some in Boston, Stow, Worcester, Shrewsbury, Holden, Sudbury, and Hatfield since their arrival in America.

In New Hampshire their numbers had outgrown the land allotted to them, and through the elapsing years became too crowded for further settlement to advantage. Those attempting to join the Massachusetts settlements had found no pleasant home anywhere. They were looked down upon by the English settlers as "wild Irish," and their religion was almost as irritating to the Puritans as the Catholic or Quaker beliefs.

In Worcester, while taxed for church dues, they were not allowed to use the church to hear one of their own preachers; and when, at great sacrifice, they built a church of their own, the Congregationalists pulled it down in the night.

The opening of a new settlement in the hills offered a home to these sturdy, dissatisfied people; and they gladly sold what they had acquired in the towns which had proved no home to them, and eagerly took up the lots in No. 2. They moved there as soon as possible, naming their own town Colrain for the town in northern Ireland where many of them had lived.

During the first years they were busy building houses for their families, shelter for their stock, cutting brush



and clearing the land, plowing and sowing to raise crops to feed their families. As soon as possible they built a Presbyterian church and had a pastor of their faith. They built a road from the hill by way of what is known as Handy's Lane, at the northern edge of the Kemp and Fairbanks farm, over to the Copeland place where Matthew Clark had settled, and over the hill down to Green River where they could reach a road to Deerfield. This was the first road built in Colrain to lead to another town; it was in constant use for years, and still may be used. Over this road the settlers took their grain to Deerfield until James Breakenridge built a grist-mill on the Branch, on the site of the present "Red Mill." It is uncertain how long this mill was in use. It was burned by the Indians, and Breakenridge did not rebuild, but sold his lot and removed to Bennington, Vt.

Almost all of the settlers had some trade besides farming. A number of them were listed as weavers, and they worked for themselves and their neighbors. Lieut. James Stewart was famous as a penman, and taught a writing school to which pupils came from neighboring towns. He served as one of the early town clerks, and his records still exist, as clear and legible as when he wrote them. One of the settlers is listed as a wig maker, but whether he found a use for his trade in his new home is not told us. There were brick layers, masons and carpenters among these men who were of great use in the new town. John Pennell, who was among the more prosperous men, built a fairly large house just north of the present Apt place, and kept a tavern and a small store. Somebody had a cooper shop, as there is record of a woman leaving home to go to one who was never seen again. She was supposed to have been taken by Indians.

By the time these people had homes, a church and roads built, and their farms under cultivation, the Indian raids began and the settlers had to build Forts Morris and Lucas on the hill and Fort Morrison on the river. These offered some protection, but life was very unsafe,





and for long years fighting Indians was a major occupation.\*

When the Indian wars were over more settlers came to Colrain. A notable group were the five families from Woodstock, Conn., who were related to each other by ties of blood or marriage, and who bought adjoining farms between present Lyonsville and the Shelburne line. The heads of these families were Hezekiah Smith, Moses Johnson, John Call, Ephraim Manning, and Thomas Fox. They had secured very good land which they farmed, but they also had other trades and occupations.

Hezekiah Smith was a man of affairs who understood common law and proper methods of doing business. He had been an important man in Woodstock, and he continued to be in Colrain. Thomas Fox built the house which still stands near the mouth of Fox brook, and opened the "Fox and Goose Tavern." He had mills on the brook near his house, a grist mill, saw mill, a cider mill and no doubt a distillery.

The first road from the Scotch Irish settlement to this part of the town was built over the hill to Thomas Fox's. The Fox house was for many years the home of Mrs. Pike, who lived to be over 100 years old and was a real daughter of the Revolution, and of her granddaughter Miss Dora Daniels. Ephraim Manning was a worker in iron and brass. Moses Johnson's sons Isaac and Lemuel had a sawmill on the river, and so did a man named Hollister.

In 1814 Warren King and Isaac Johnson built the first cotton mill on the river, on the east bank, and Isaac Johnson started the first Sunday School in town. King and Johnson sold to Calvin Shattuck of Leyden, and in the flood of '69 his mill was swept away. He then rebuilt on the west bank. After his death it became the Field

\* This part of Colrain has been mostly given over to farming, fruit-raising, and cattle breeding. In later years Copeland's Holsteins were famous, and the fine apple and peach orchards made many farmers prosperous people.



and Cannedy Massamet Yarn Company. When this business ceased to pay the mill was closed and the machinery sold. After a time the mill was torn down, and another industry had vanished.

Perhaps of all the group of settlers from Woodstock none of them personified industry as did John Call. His diary is still in existence, and one of his descendants in Exeter, N. H., has an exact copy, which I have read. He set down his day's work, the money he received and paid, the births of his children and the death of his mother-in-law, which he seemed to regret. He was an expert in his lines of work. He was a good teamster, and not only used his horses for himself and neighbors, but during the Revolution he teamed supplies from Albany to Ticonderoga while they were needed, and never missed a trip or lost a cargo. His neighbor, Major Hezekiah Smith and three sons were defending Ticonderoga at this time.

When teaming was not needed, John Call was an expert weaver, and his diary lists many blankets, yards of cloth and flannel which he wove to order.

He was also an expert cobbler, and made boots and shoes for whole families. One entry in his diary is payment by Hezekiah Smith for boots and shoes for his large family. With the help of his sons he carried on his farm and seems to have enjoyed his busy life. Some have credited him with a mill also, but he does not mention that in his diary, and I think that must apply to his son, John Call, Jr. This Woodstock group were all Baptists, and until they could get a Baptist church built they had to travel to Ashfield for means of Grace, but they had a church in Colrain as soon as a few more Baptist families moved to town.

Quite a different group settled on Catamount Hill. These people were mostly Reformed Methodists as to religion, and were divided in politics. The men on Catamount cleared farms and raised what they could. For as long as it was profitable the men had charcoal pits; they cut lumber and sold it, and a man named Smith at one





time had a store on the hill top near the Stacy Stetson farm. When he received a consignment of new goods he would take the old dinner horn out and blow it toward the four points of the compass. Those who heard it sent on the good news by the grapevine telegraph, which has always worked so well in Colrain, and as soon as possible customers began to arrive. Certainly that style of advertising has been lost to us.

The Catamount legends of industry are more about their women than men. Perhaps the most historic piece of work ever done in Colrain was when Mrs. Rhoda Shippee, Mrs. Lois Shippee, Mrs. Sophis Willis and Mrs. Stephen Hale made the first American flag ever raised over a school house in the United States. It was raised by Paul Davenport and Amasa Shippee and other loyal residents of Catamount Hill in the presence of an enthusiastic crowd of sympathizers.

Mrs. Rhoda Shippee was a notable woman of great strength and quickness of motion—she was famed for her ability as a housewife and nurse, and is said to have traveled to her neighbors on snow shoes to give them needed help. Perhaps her most famous exploit was the speed with which she produced a pair of trousers for her husband. When he came home and told her he had enlisted for the War of 1812 she went out and clipped fleece from a black sheep and a white one: she carded the wool by hand and spun it on her old wheel, wove it on a hand loom and cut and made the trousers before her husband left for Boston next day. She had no dark thread, so she drew white thread over the bottom of the dinner pot till it was black enough for her purpose. This seems to us an incredible story, but it was well attested by her neighbors, who were reliable people. That it was not an impossible or unheard of feat is shown by an account of a New Hampshire woman who had to do practically the same task in the same length of time, but history says nothing about her having to color her thread.

At one time fifty families lived on Catamount and





maintained a school and religious services, but now I do not know that any family lives on the hill the year around, and most of the old houses are gone.

Before the Revolution Christian Hill had been partly settled by younger sons of the Scotch Irish families who held second division grants in the northern part of the town; as David Wilson, son of Deacon James Wilson, who settled on the hill which still bears his name, and the Pennell sons, who on the death of their father sold his tavern and lot to John Wood, while they remained on Christian Hill. Other settlers there and on Catamount had been crowded out of Vermont by the conflicting claims of New York and New Hampshire.\* Settlers who had bought their land and paid their money to one state found a purchaser from the other in possession; and they could not secure a title to the land nor get back their money. Halifax and Guilford were bitter battlegrounds in this conflict, and some of the dispossessed were glad to take refuge over the Massachusetts line in Colrain.

The business on Christian Hill could only be farming, and the men had a hard time clearing the ground—it was much harder here than in the southern part of the town and in the valleys, but the people got a living, built comfortable homes, a school, and a church where preaching is maintained to the present time. The people were isolated from the rest of the town and went to Halifax to trade—what little they could afford to do.

In a very old history I found the story of three women on Christian Hill in the early days who owned one darning needle in common. They used it in turn, with its time of use carefully figured; and they were all most scrupulous in not keeping it beyond the allotted time, lest one of the others would not get her mending done before Saturday night. No woman ever treasured diamonds with greater care or suffered more anxiety about them than these women in their care for their wonderful

\* See P.V.M.A., vol. VI, page 231.





needle. One woman was a Gault and one a Pennell. The names are gone from the town now except the corrupted remembrance in the name of Pannel Hill, which was once "Pennell."

The Burringtons and Sanders came up from Rhode Island with other families, and the hill was closely settled for a time. The population is sadly decreased, but there are still good farms on Christian Hill and the Franklin Forestry Company carries on an industry to the present time.

One of the earliest industries in town was the keeping of taverns, and with that went cider mill and distilleries for brandy and rum. One of the Donelson family had a distillery on Wilson Hill. Before the Revolution Thomas Cochran and his sons, Robert and John, came up from Pelham and built quite a large tavern at what is now Colrain village, on the site of Mrs. Walter A. Thompson's house. At the time this was not a good location, as the road from the mountain met the river road above the present village at Nye's ford and the river road continued to the Red Mill on the northern band of the river. Just above this junction was the tavern of Matthew Donelson.

Perhaps the Cochrans had foreseen a change when roads would cross where they built, but this did not develop in their time, and for that reason or others they left Colrain for Bennington, Vt., where they did good service in the Revolution, and prospered. They were before their time in Colrain. During the bitter years after the Revolution the population of Colrain increased rapidly, till between 1800 and 1810 it had the largest population of any town in the present Franklin County, and it did not begin to fall till after the Civil War.

The reason for the rush to settle even the wildest parts of the town is no longer apparent except in flood times. One cannot imagine now the water power which rushed down not only the river but the mountain brooks, now so nearly dry except in spring. Many residents of the





longer settled parts of New England had been ruined by the war and heavy taxes, and were forced to sell their properties to enable them to save any part of it. The industrious men with trades hastened to find new homes where land was cheap and water power free. Industries sprang up along the river and its branches.

About 1795 Edward Adams with his sons Edward, Jr., Eliphalet and John settled at the site on the Branch which still bears their name. At Adamsville they built a tavern and the usual distillery, potash works, and also mills for fulling cloth and grinding corn. After the passing of the Adams family John Wilson ran the tavern and post office for many years. Fifty years ago the tavern was closed and the industries were gone except Fred Kendrick's sawmill and lumber yard.

The first telephones in town were put in by the old Heath Company and the central office was at Adamsville with Mrs. Hattie Kendrick as operator. When the Heath Company sold out to the New England Telephone Company the central office was moved to Colrain village.

There were for many years a blacksmith shop at Adamsville and a store, there no longer.

Other settlers in this locality were the Blandings on what was later the Edwin Cobb farm. They ran the farm, raised neat stock and ran a sawmill. They were prosperous people, but moved west in the fifties. There were industries in the Churchill district, and over the hill from there was a lively little hamlet, called "Gimletville," where they made gimlets and small tools. Another industry of this region was wooden ware—two mills made brooms, chopping trays, wooden bowls, ox yokes, lather boxes, rolling pins, etc.

One of these mills was run by Thomas White and his three sons, Thomas, John and Luke: and they spent their summers farming, and winters in the shop. Old White had a milch cow which he had broken to a handmade rope harness and to draw a light cart. Every spring





when roads were settled White loaded the cart with their winter's production, hitched in the cow and started out about town to sell to whoever would buy. He was fond of bread and milk, so, night and morning he would milk the cow, buying bread of convenient neighbors and so feast himself. He disposed of the surplus milk to whoever could use it. He is said to have returned home from these trips with goods sold and with no loss from hotel bills, transportation or advertising. Old White and his cow are among Colrain traditions.

Major Smith Pierce had a sawmill near the White's, and there is mention of a second blacksmith shop, a turning mill, gristmill, carding mill and wagon and sleigh manufactory in this region; and on Taylor brook were two sawmills, a blacksmith shop and tannery, though the workers' names are not recorded.

Barnabas Porter, who lived in this vicinity, grew the first Porter apple, to which he gave his name, and he brought the first Baldwin grafts into town. Fruit trees were first grafted in Colrain in 1798. Small villages once stood in these localities, but now, except at Adamsville, there are only scattered houses here and there and the busy places of old are marked by half-filled cellar holes and in spring by flowering lilac bushes. There was an article in this year's town warrant asking for a vote to decide upon what shall be done with the Churchill school house. This, too, is a vanished industry.

One of the most important industrialists of that period after the Revolution was Jesse Lyons who came to Colrain from Hingham, where he had learned the cabinet maker's trade, and he started business in that part of Colrain which still bears his name. He either built or enlarged the Arthur Smith house at Lyonsville and kept a tavern there, and he also had a cider mill and brandy distillery. For his real business he built a shop across the street, which is now a double dwelling house, and in that shop he made coffins and beautiful furniture. Many pieces of Lyons furniture still remain in town and others





are scattered through the country, still highly prized for their design and craftsmanship.

The carving in the Willis house and in the Gilderdale house on Christian Hill was done by him; but the one great work of his, remaining in town today, is the beautiful pulpit in the Colrain Congregationalist church from which Priest Taggart preached the funeral eulogy of George Washington at the time of his death. The pulpit then stood in a church on North River above the village, but when the present church was completed the pulpit was not thought good enough to grace the new edifice and was placed in the town hall where it served eighty years as a moderator's desk. In 1902, when the first Old Home celebration was held, visitors of discernment discovered the beauty of the old pulpit and called to it the attention of the late Lorenzo Griswold, who at his own expense had the pulpit properly restored and placed in the church where it was rededicated to its proper use. Many people go to see it every year.

At Lyonsville also Moses Howard had his shoe shop, and it is probable that a man named Taylor built the Joseph Clark house and had a harness business there. He certainly had the harness shop and later sold the place to Dr. George Winslow who seems to have lacked a sense of humor, for, besides practicing his profession he opened a marble shop. At least, it was not tactful for a doctor to practice medicine and at the same time sell gravestones.

Ignatius Perkins started a small business at the Foundry village in 1841 making wagon shafts, and later moved to the Willis Place where he made sleighs, wagons and clapboards and had a very successful business. He built the house at Griswoldville where the late Lorenzo Griswold lived so many years and which since his death was torn down. On the death of Perkins his son James took over the business, but failed. It was sold to Ansel C. Smith who carried on for a few years till he retired to go into the store at Colrain village with his son





Henry. About 1863 Joseph Griswold bought this property and put up a cotton mill.

Another man, prominent in both town and industry was Major Daniel Willis who came from Sudbury and built a mill and fine brick house at the place which still bears his name. In his mill he manufactured clothing and was most successful. Some of his descendants were among Colrain's most useful and prominent citizens. After his passing the mill was used for a time as a turning mill before Joseph Griswold bought the whole property.

Cooking stoves came into use in 1814 and iron plows in 1824, and Colrain made them both. Joseph Davenport, son of Elder Edward Davenport, built a foundry at the place which is still called Foundryville. He was joined by George Hastings of Heath in partnership. After a few years Davenport sold out his share to Waitstill Hasting of Charlemont and went to Hartford. The Hastings carried on for a time, I do not know how long. A man in Ashfield owns a plow at the present time which has their name stamped upon it. In 1850 the foundry was run by Solomon Gleason who later sold out to Ariel Thomas of Heath who carried on the work till the foundry was swept away by the flood of '69, after which it was not rebuilt. Thomas was the inventor and maker of a remarkable side hill plow which was in great demand; he made box stoves, cook stoves and fire frames, one of which at least is still in use in the home of George E. Clark.

Daniel Newton had a shop near the foundry where pitchforks, shovels, carriage bows, shafts and hubs were made; and in the York house, now owned by Earl M. Nichols, Messinger and Stacy manufactured boots and shoes and kept a small stock of footwear on hand for local sale.

W. W. Cary, whose home was at the Foundry village and who was the father of the late Whiting Cary, was greatly interested in bees and built up a very successful



apiary. Reverend Lorenzo L. Langstroth\* came to work with him and together they invented the Langstroth hive which marked a great advance in bee culture. Mr. Cary is said to have imported the first Italian queen bee and he made several successful experiments which were adopted by other bee men, and he was famous among bee men of that day.

They also started a cider mill, and in later years that was carried on by Herbert Cary and the apiary by Earl M. Nichols, son-in-law of Whiting Cary; but on the death of Mr. Herbert Cary the apiary was given up and the Cary bees and honey vanished, while Mr. Nichols carried on the cider business and still does. They make every year a large amount of cider and cider vinegar, the latter of such quality that it has been used by the Food and Drug department of the U. S. Bureau of Chemistry as a standard for testing other vinegars. The cider and vinegar factory is all that remains of the industries of Foundryville.

Before industry started in Colrain village it was thriving from the state line southward. At the Starks place, which was then thought to stand exactly across the state line, half in Colrain and half in Halifax, the Starks for two generations sold liquor, and performed marriage ceremonies as justices of the peace. People thought they evaded the law by going from the north end of the house into the south to leave Vermont, and from the southern rooms to the northern to leave Massachusetts. The old squires did a thriving industry, both in liquor and weddings; but long after the old squires were dead and the place had become a plain farm house the state line was run again and did not go through the house at all, but between the house and barn: the house was entirely in Vermont.

Just below the state line and wholly in Colrain was a busy saw mill and also a tannery. Thoroughly tanned

\* "Langstroth, who invented the movable frame properly so called": Maeterlinck. Author, 1853, of "The Honey Bee." translated into French; still the standard work. Notes on L.L.L. are in P.V.M.A. files. Editor.





leather was in great demand, cow hide boots and shoes being foot protectors the year around, and farmers from adjoining towns patronized these Colrain tanneries to secure a supply of leather against the annual visit of the cobbler. On Shepardson brook E. C. Harris had a mill for making clapboards, and between the state line and Elm Grove were Moore's sash and blind works and Parsons and Athertins' tannery. Before Colrain village came to life Elm Grove was a very prosperous little village. There Loren McCulloch had his plow works, Ezra Plumb a mill for wool carding; there was Taylor's tannery and Smead's sash and blind shop. The people there had a school, a post office and two doctors,—all before Colrain village started.

Between Elm Grove and Colrain village was the tavern of Matthew Donelson; and after his day the place was owned by the Dennison brothers, Major David and H. B. Dennison. They built a dam across the river near their home, had a saw and grist mill and made ox bows and yokes, farmed extensively and were the largest wool growers in town.

Colrain village, or "the City," as it was known, did not get started till about 1800 or later, when the roads were changed and the road to Lyonsville ran on the south bank of the river along the stretch, between Colrain and the Willis place, where the river runs from east to west. A road had been built down the mountain where the present road lies and met the river road as now, at the foot of the hill. Thomas Miller, son of William, was first to see the advantage of the new cross roads and took down a small tavern in the east part of the town, transported the timbers to the new location and built the first tavern at Colrain City. He also built a store where the town building stands, and potash works near by. The little hill leading down onto River street still bears the unromantic name of Potash Hill.

Miller did a very good business between tavern, store and potash works. He often took his pay in barter for





produce which he could use or sell again. He died when comparatively a young man and the tavern was taken over by Thomas Wiswell Thompson and his brother Hollis, and for many years the hotel was in the hands of some of the Thompson family who enlarged and improved it. The last of the Thompsons to run the hotel was Sally, the daughter of Wiswell Thompson, and her husband, General Orrin Gaines. I do not know where the latter got his military title, but he was always known as "the General." Mrs. Gaines was famous for her good cooking, and both she and her husband famed for their hospitality and good cheer. There are people still living who remember "the General" and Aunt Sally with affection. P. T. Barnum ate dinner there in their day, and assured them it was the best dinner he had eaten in forty years. He found no humbug about Aunt Sally's cooking.

The old hotel burned in 1886 and the Gaines retired to private life. Another hotel built by Ansel Smith on that site was run by various people till it burned in 1896, when C. J. Russell was proprietor. A third hotel was erected on the same site and is still there. In early days Robert McClellan kept a tavern in the Cochran house, but was not very successful and the house passed into the possession of Isaac Barber who was the first lawyer in town;\* and the house was always known thereafter as the Barber house, though it was later owned by Lucius Lyons who kept tavern for a while and then built the house over into apartments. In the south-eastern corner, facing the common, George Russell had a tailor shop and employed several women to work for him. The widow of Lucius Lyons, and afterward their daughter, Mrs. Antes (Lyons) Spurr lived in one apartment and rented the others till the house burned in 1895. Mrs. Spurr then built a smaller house on the same site, now owned by Mrs. Walter A. Thompson.

About 1830 Solomon Sykes and Asaph Snow began

\* Isaac Barber was the first register of probate and a captain in the War of 1812. See P.V.M.A., VII.





the manufacture of wagons and sleighs in a shop where the Ansel Smith house stands, next the Congregational church, and Sykes built the house on the river known as the Dean house, from its long occupation by Dr. Christopher Deane. It is now the home of Frederick Call. About this time David Fox built the house now occupied by Patrick Looman and Hubert Mockler and families, and below the house on the road built a shop for the making of felt hats. When this industry passed a man named Tanner bought the shop and made it into a dwelling house which his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Abbie Tanner occupied for many years. She is remembered for her quaint habit of always standing when she had callers and for her happy celebration of her golden wedding many years after her husband had died. She sensibly remarked to a criticising neighbor—"Well, it was my wedding and I am not dead."

The father of Henry and Jesse Dewey of Griswoldville for years had a blacksmith shop across the road from his house just above the Tanner house. He was famous for his skill in shoeing oxen. The McGee house, built across the brook, had a cooper's shop in the north end, while the family occupied the rest of the house. During the 1850's carriage and sleigh building was carried on by Oscar Weatherhead and Joseph Lyons, and they were succeeded by Winchester and Weatherhead, Ralph Childs and H. H. Winchester and Sons.

After the manufacture of carriages and sleighs ceased in town they were still needed, and John D. Miller and Charles A. Marcy formed a partnership for their sale and built a warehouse adjoining the Miller home. After Mr. Miller's death Mr. Marcy carried on the business till the demand was greater for automobiles and trucks. Mr. Marcy then closed out his carriage business and sold automobiles for some years. In early years a cobbler's shop stood where John Pitt's house now stands and was torn down when Orson Curtis built the Pitt house. A very old blacksmith shop stood for many years on the





site of Call's garage, and below the Dean house was a shoe shop which was carried away by the flood of '69, which took not only the shop but all the land on which it stood.

The Congregationalist church was, after long and fierce battles, finally built at the village on its present site and the Methodist church was built a few years later: the "City" was on its way up.

Clark Chandler, who had built a store on the mountain in 1781 and had been very successful there, saw that trade would now go to the valley, as the churches and town hall had centered there; and he built a store at the village on the corner where the mountain road joins the river road, opposite the present town building. A store was maintained on that corner for many years, but that and the adjoining building which was once Marcy's carriage and auto repository have all been built over into apartments. About 1812 Samuel Coolidge built the brick store, and some years later the house now occupied by the Colrain post office, opposite the hotel. A young lawyer came to town about the same time and built a brick office next the church; the little building which served many years, after lawyers had vanished from the town, as a meat market and now that too is a vanished industry.

Before the civil war Philo Marsh had a tin shop in the village, made all sorts of kitchen and farm ware and sent out tin peddlers to the surrounding country to sell the goods and buy rags. Everybody kept a rag-bag in those days and saved every scrap of cloth and paper. Charles A. Marcy and William H. Donelson began their careers as tin peddlers; another vanished industry, for tin ware and tin carts are seen no more. Mr. Marcy was proud of his early days and I have heard him describe some of his experiences as he traveled the roads from North Adams to Templeton as well as in other directions. One of the tricks of the trade he thought amusing. He carried a supply of heavy glass tumblers for sale and acquired the





knack of throwing them across a kitchen floor without breaking them. He said he broke plenty learning the right throw to do the trick, but he made up his losses by his large sales of "unbreakable glass" to housewives impressed by the tumbler-throwing trick. I asked if they ever discovered they would break unless he did the throwing and he laughed and said, "Probably, but they never complained."

In time Mr. Marcy was able to buy out Marsh, and for years he had a flourishing tin shop to which he added plumbing and the sale of household goods. He employed an expert tinner, Albert Smead who for years made tin ware and mended it and every winter made a supply of syrup cans for local use. Mr. Marcy also engaged in the insurance business and real estate, loaned money on good security, was interested in lumbering operations and, as I have said, sold wagons, sleighs and automobiles. These last occupations took so much of his time that many years ago he sold his shop and tin and plumbing business to C. J. Carpenter. Carpenter and his son carried on for years, but now they have closed the shop and carry on their work from their own home.

The farmers once raised stock for meat and sold to Patrick Looman at the City and to Ross Purrington at Shattuckville who killed and dressed their own meat, made lard, salt pork and corned beef and we cannot buy the same kind today. Among the busy people of the village many years ago were the two brothers who came from Arlington, Vt. Shubal Buck was a builder of mills and he certainly found a town to give him work: he was the father of the late Mrs. Elias Bardwell and Miss Adelaide Buck. His brother, Roswell, was both a house and wagon builder. David Fisk was a house and carriage painter of famed skill.

Between Colrain village and the Willis place, at comparatively an early date after the beginning of the village, Robert McClellan and Samuel Peck built a paper mill, but it never paid the cost of construction and that





vanished. A mill which stood nearer the Willis place was used by various men for different purposes; nothing very definite is recorded except that at one time it was used by Hugh Bolton Miller, but the industry he conducted is not named.

Griswoldville began to live at about the time of the beginning of Colrain City. Joseph Griswold of Buckland settled there in 1830 and built himself a home and a shop for making doors, window sash and blinds. The following year he added the making of lather boxes and still later of gimlets and augers. He was a hard-working man and never spared himself, and could accomplish in a day more than any two or three men he could hire. He is said to have shingled his barn in one day without help, laying 7000 shingles.

About 1832 he decided to manufacture cotton goods and built a small mill with 16 looms, and later built a brick mill with 144 looms. The first mill was destroyed by fire in 1851 and the second in 1856.

In the year 1846 Mr. Griswold opened a commission house in New York and a model farm in Stonington, Conn., where his family lived for about six years while he carried on his manufacturing at the same time. In 1852 he moved back to Colrain and rebuilt his burned mill. In 1855 he became interested in agriculture and bought up several farms on Christian hill and other localities. The one on Christian hill is now the site of the Franklin Forestry Company's plantations. In 1856 Mr. Griswold rebuilt his second mill, which started in 1858 with 210 looms. In 1865 he bought the Willis place property and built a new cotton mill there and took into partnership his three sons, Ethan, Joseph, Jr. and Lorenzo. In 1879 he added the mills at Turners Falls to his operations.

Proper credit should be given to this man's industry, which was phenomenal. In his building operations the timber was cut on his own land and prepared in his own saw mills; sand and clay from his own property formed





the bricks he used and they were baked under his own supervision. He founded a large and prosperous business to leave to his children and it remained in the Griswold family a hundred years. For many years they manufactured sorbent gauze for hospitals and cheese cloth. The business was sold to the Kendall Company in June, 1932, and today not a Griswold is left in Colrain.

I think this completes the special industries of Colrain as far as I have been able to trace them, but there were general industries carried on all over town—agriculture, fruit growing, wool growing, cattle raising, tobacco growing and general cereal crops and flax; and some of these industries still survive. Hard times hit Colrain in 1837. It was during that decade that the mulberry craze spread over the country and was eagerly welcomed by many people as a means of relieving their financial difficulties. Mulberry trees were set out on many farms and with great hope the people undertook the culture of silk worms, but the enterprise was a failure and was abandoned by 1839. The last I knew one lone mulberry tree was still growing on the Cromack farm on Franklin hill—a memorial to buried hopes and a lost industry.

Before the railroad reached Greenfield staging and teaming were active industries of Colrain. Cheapside was then a sort of sea port, and boats brought goods up the Deerfield river, landing them there and teams went down from the hill towns to get the goods billed to their towns. Joseph B. Clark has left an account of the days when he brought goods from Cheapside, flour from Springfield and occasionally made trips to Boston and back. Many young men were employed in this way. From the time the railroad reached Greenfield till it was brought to Shelburne Falls a daily stage ran from Colrain to Greenfield over the mountain and back. For many years Lysander Brownell drove this stage, bringing the mail, passengers, luggage and parcels. After the railroad reached Shelburne Falls a stage went down twice a day and returned until the electric road was built



in 1896. There were also stages to Adamsville, Heath and Jacksonville, Vt.

The coming and going of stages was of great interest to the people of the town fifty years ago, and I remember well the custom they had of going to bed as soon as the nine o'clock mail was in and distributed. It was a very lonesome custom to people coming there to live who were used to later hours. On every evening except Saturday a look around the village at 9.30 in the evening would show every house except the doctor's in darkness, or, perhaps a light shone where there was illness or the home of Mrs. Spurr who had decided on that time to paper a room or paint furniture. She was entirely deaf; and while she enjoyed company and could read lips perfectly, she could not work if she was interrupted, so she often chose late evening for her many occupations.

The Colrain electric road was built in 1896 and the first time it was used it was to carry voters to the November election. There had been a previous celebration by town officials and officers of the road and invited guests, and it was a great day for the town. The road for many years was both useful and pleasant for the people. It carried the mails for those years and did a large freighting business, and it carried many thousands of barrels of apples out of town. The increase in motor cars and trucks ruined the freight business and injured the passenger service till it was no longer a paying concern and was finally abandoned. The tracks were torn up when the new state road was built about ten years ago.

The electric road was greatly missed and nothing really has taken its place. It was a kindly, personal, informal road; the same men worked on it for years and knew everybody and everybody knew them. Conrad Sauter drove the first car into town and the last one out. All the employees were kind and neighborly. You could send any sort of errand by them and have it properly done; if you were not quite ready when the car came along they would wait for you to finish dressing and get





on your hat and then make up the time. When you came home from a railroad trip one of them would be sure to meet you at the train and take your luggage to the car; and if your train was late and they knew you were coming on it they would hold the car a reasonable time.

When the electric road vanished and the workers scattered Colrain lost something comfortable that has never come again. Now an automobile brings the mail from Shelburne Falls to Shattuckville, Griswoldville, Lyonsville and Colrain, and R.F.D. carriers carry the mail from Griswoldville and Colrain to the outlying farms. There is still a star route stage which runs from Jacksonville, Vermont, to Colrain and back—the last of Colrain stages.

At the Red mill on the branch the late Fred W. Purrington carried on a successful manufactory of boxes, and his mill furnished power for the first electric lights in Colrain. They were on till midnight, but at that time Mr. Purrington turned off the power and went home to bed. If anyone was giving a party, or there was a public occasion warranting the concession, he would keep on till 1 o'clock, but no later; and he sometimes forgot his agreement. Imagine a room full of guests playing whist or partaking of refreshments and without warning the rooms plunged in deepest darkness; imagine the wild scramble in the dark for lamps and the apologies to guests! It was one of the problems of entertaining in those days which I remember acutely.

About forty years ago a small arts and crafts society flourished at the City and what they lacked in numbers they made up in industry and effort. One man did oil and water color painting, tooled leather and did pyrography; some of the women worked at the last two occupations and also did raffia weaving, basket making, photography, chair caning and embroidery. The club lived but a few years and was more fun than art, but the members worked hard while it lasted.

The extension service has organized many groups of



workers to make gowns, hats, etc., and also hooked rugs.

This brings us to the work the women of Colrain have accomplished in 200 years, and for which I would like to give them credit. Of course they have done their share from the first in the usual work of frontier women, house keeping, child bearing and raising, sewing, mending, cooking, cleaning, spinning, weaving—few of these women ever failed in these things, but many of them did more. During the French and Indian and the Revolutionary wars when the men were away fighting the women and children did the necessary farm work. In days of peace they made beautiful quilts set with fine needlework; they knit all the stockings for their families and they wove bedspreads, table linen, towels and other articles.

When Colrain held its first Old Home celebration, which lasted three days, the town hall was arranged like a colonial home and treasures brought from all over town to furnish it. In the exhibit were numerous bedspreads, woven in blue and white or in red and white patterns; bedspreads tufted in elaborate patterns with candle wicking; gorgeous quilts quilted in elaborate patterns with fine stitches; embroidered samplers; hand woven tablecloths and napkins and towels; braided and hooked rugs; netted valences for high post beds; crocheted lace and beautiful knitting. Everyone who saw the display wondered how those women with large families and so much house work, and no artificial light but candles and whale oil lamps, ever accomplished the really fine work shown there.

I think Colrain women have always been fine cooks. There is a story that when Amasa Shippee was invited to Major Smith Pierce's to a husking he sent word he would come if "Aunt Liddy" (Mrs. Pierce), would make him a pumpkin pie on a stone boat. When supper was served he called for his pie and Mrs. Pierce brought in one baked on an immense platter several feet in circumference. Mrs. Pierce said to Mr. Shippee, "You





know, sir, that the Major does not keep his stone boat clean enough for baking pies, neither would my oven hold one, but perhaps you can make this pie do." Mr. Shippee thought he could.

Mrs. Pierce's sister, Betsy Blandin, was famous for her wedding cakes and bride loaves; and she was often called upon to use her skill, for not only friends and neighbors but for people at a distance who longed for a Blandin cake to grace their wedding festivities. Girls and women not needed at home often went to assist families where an emergency called, if there were not enough strong women there to do all the work. No one thought less of them and their social standing remained the same. The wages for such household help ran from fifty cents to \$1.25 per week with board, but the higher price was thought excessive.

At one period it was a popular industry for women to braid hats. Dealers brought loads of palm leaf to the houses and left as much as could be used before the hats were collected. The pay was six cents for a boy's hat and eight cents for a man's; and the price of the palm leaf was from ten to fifteen cents per pound, to be paid for in hats. Sometimes the palm leaf was very poor, and sometimes worthless. An expert could braid from six to ten hats per day and a pound of good leaf would provide material for six or seven hats. This would seem a hard bargain now, but at that some unscrupulous dealers would wet the leaf to increase its weight and the water had to be paid for.

When the traders came for their hats they brought a supply of cheap goods—cheap cloth, hair combs and a variety of brass and fire-gilt jewelry. The braiders were urged to buy and, far from stores, they were tempted. If anything was due them after paying for their leaf and purchases it was a time for rejoicing, for perhaps a dollar had been received in cash. Somebody made money, but not the women. Sometimes they had a bee, and perhaps 25 women would meet at some home and spend the



day together and each strive to outdo the others by the number of hats they could braid during the allotted time. It is recorded that at one such bee they finished 110 hats. When the braiding was over they had dinner together and in the evening the men came for games, cider and popcorn and to escort the ladies home. I suppose the "bee" system accounts for much of the old beautiful work. A day taken off in which the women worked together, with perhaps the men carrying on work of their own outside, accomplished many a task that would have taken too long alone.

The women made the butter and cheese and cared for the poultry until a late period, and if their husbands were very generous and broadminded they allowed their wives the butter and egg proceeds for spending money, but not all husbands were that generous. A very old lady told me many years ago that when she was married her husband agreed to let her have that money, and did for some years. When her eldest child wanted to take music lessons she found where she could buy a secondhand organ for a moderate price and made her arrangements to buy it, and to that end denied herself everything she could and saved her money till the amount was secured.

Unfortunately, when the next trip to town came a neighbor wanted to go with her husband and she had to stay home; so, with perfect trust in her husband she gave him the money, told him where to find the organ and waited all day for it to be brought home. Her husband came, but not the organ. She asked about it and he said, "Do you think I would spend all that money on an organ? I bought a calf with it." "But," she stammered, "the money was mine." He said, "Not at all, the money was mine." She said she ran out in the woods and laid all night behind a log, praying to die. It was not so much the money as the new light she had on her husband's mind. He was a good man, admired and trusted by his neighbors for his integrity, but she realized then that his wife was not included in his fair dealing. She did not die,





but lived long years after the death of her husband and to the last she felt the bitterness of her lost faith in her husband. Life was not easy for women then and no matter how hard they worked they were still dependent on some man's good will.

Women in those days were usually good nurses and always willing to go to a neighbor in an emergency. Later women who could be spared from home earned money by caring for the sick. Fifty years ago there were a dozen women in Colrain who could be secured for practical home nursing. Seven dollars a week was considered very good pay, and these women often not only cared for the sick, but did the housework also. Their work was good, as I know by experience. A good American girl could then be found to do housework and cooking from two to three dollars per week, according to the capabilities of the girl and the size of the household; and a woman could be hired by the day or hour to come in to wash, clean house or other work for ten cents per hour.

One hard working woman of Colrain has been well remembered. This was Louisa Dennison Griswold, wife of Joseph of Griswoldville. He had nothing to beat his wife in the way of industry and endurance. She was the mother of thirteen children, six of whom lived to maturity. She was a famous housekeeper and a gracious hostess, and she not only attended to her own work but was of great assistance to her husband in many of his ventures. She was a kind neighbor, visiting and helping the sick or those in trouble; when anyone was ill or unhappy they went to or sent for Mrs. Griswold. Among her other activities she made 300 pounds of maple sugar from the trees around her house. I have heard her son, Lorenzo, say that he would never allow his wife to work as his mother did.

Both men and women usually worked at sugar making, and in the early days sugar was made on every farm where there was a sugar bush. Every housekeeper expected to have on hand tubs of soft maple sugar, to use



in her cooking to save store sugar and molasses. It was used to sweeten pies and mincemeat and melted to syrup to serve with griddle cakes. Old recipes call for maple syrup in cakes, cookies and puddings; and most of those eatables were delicious but it is long since maple sugar was used much for cooking, and comparatively few of the farmers make sugar now. Years ago Mr. Benjamin Miller invented "maple cream" and had a large sale for it. The Apts also made it for a time, and so did Herbert Donelson's family; but I do not know whether it is made now or not.

In every early home were the dye tubs, and women mostly did this work. Indigo blue and butternut brown were the most common colors, but some women acquired great skill in making and using vegetable dyes, and often the secret of a particular dye was kept in one family. Soap making was an important work on every farm. In this both men and women assisted, and each year a family produced a good supply of both hard and soft soaps. The women usually made the candles which furnished light for the long winter evenings. They were of two kinds—the moulded and the dipped tapers. Old candle molds can yet be found in Colrain attics.

I would like to pay tribute here to the wonderful cooking of Colrain women as I have known it in the last fifty years. Never again will be eaten such chicken pies as these women made. No biscuit about their crusts, but a fine crust made of butter and cream, flaky and crisp. It would melt in your mouth, with rich gravy, plenty of meat and few bones. There is nobody left who knows how to make them as Mrs. Antes Spurr, Mrs. Ansel Smith, Mrs. Henry Smith, Mrs. Newton Carpenter and others of that generation did, though good chicken pie is still made in Colrain.

Mrs. Spurr and her daughter, Mrs. Kelly, were famous for their bread and rolls and took prizes at Greenfield fair—as did Mrs. Ansel Smith for her election cake, Mrs. David Snow for doughnuts, Mrs. Sarah





Smith for piccalilli and ketchup and Mrs. Charles Marcy for pumpkin pies; and when Mrs. Olive Howard cooked a boiled dinner for the Relief Corps they had a crowd and made money. Most of the women cooked everything well, but each of them had a specialty, for which they were famed and for which they were called on for public occasions.

A poor young bride, I longed to have a specialty too—I could never compete on old recipes, I must have something new. So I learned to make timbales when on a visit to Springfield, and I bought an iron and came home ready to establish myself with a specialty all my own. When a supper was being planned I offered to furnish the dessert and was allowed the privilege. I made a large number of very nice timbale cases and a special sort of rice pudding with which, at the last minute I filled the cases and topped each with a fluff of whipped cream and a dash of currant jelly in the center. I thought these a work of art and served them proudly. Alas, everyone ate out the pudding and left my beautiful cases, and I heard a man say, "Tasted well enough, but didn't amount to nothing—I'd rather have pie." I never tried my specialty in public again. After all, who would prefer such foolishness to a real Colrain pie?

In late years women have been occupied in public affairs more than once would have been believed possible. A woman has served on the town committee at various times during the last 25 years, two women have served as librarian of the Griswold Memorial Library and Miss Bertha Read still holds that position. A woman is town clerk and treasurer, two women serve on the school committee and board of library trustees, a woman served 14 years as notary public and a woman is now town auditor.

Many women and some men have been successful school teachers, and the town misses those of an older day who boarded in town, called on the parents, took an interest in town activities. Such a teacher knew all about her children and drilled them in exercises and manners.



Present day teachers own their own cars and seldom board in town or stay a moment they can help; they do not know the parents nor even the children too well. The old style teacher is gone, and so are the private schools which flourished before the children could go to Arms Academy.

The traveling clock tinker was once a welcome visitor in town, and Colrain had one of the best in the person of Washington Call who kept the old clocks going as long as he lived. Many of them have never gone since his death. Another industry which vanished with the death of the man who created it was the making of samp, hulled corn and hominy by Charles Call who made a weekly trip to the villages to sell his products. It was good stuff—I do not know where anything like it could be bought now.

We have had many merchants in Colrain, many doctors and ministers, but only three lawyers. As the mills cut off the lumber the streams dried up, and even if the small business could now be profitable the power is gone; white coal has vanished from Colrain, and even the cotton mills use electricity much of the year.

Colrain has not done much in fine arts and we have no famous son or daughter engaged in them, but a Colrain girl married one of the most famous stained glass artists in the country—Charles J. Connick; and we had for some years a famous painter who dwelt in town and had a studio and loved to paint beautiful bits of Colrain, so I think we can lay some claim to the late Gardner Symons. A beautiful picture of a Colrain hill hangs in the Corcoran Art Gallery in Washington, D.C.; and when I was in California ten years ago I went every day for weeks to gaze on a picture of Shattuckville by him. It was a beautiful picture, and while I recognized it at once I thought “I never saw Shattuckville like that” and was immediately reminded of the woman who told the painter Turner that she never saw such sunsets as he painted, and he answered, “No? Don’t you wish you could?”





I went day after day to try to see Shattuckville as it was in the picture. I knew the fairy towers showing through mist were really the cupola on Frank Field's barn and the old water tower on the mill; the river breaking through ice and snow in the foreground was just North river; and the hillside touched with sunshine, bringing it into beauty and charm, was familiar; and yet the painter's art had lifted it from the dull and commonplace by not only what he had painted and the way, but by the elimination or softening of the harsh and ugly.

It gave me not only a new view of Colrain, but of life. I went so often to look at that one picture that the attendant thought I might be a possible purchaser. The price was \$700.00. I appreciated the compliment, but told her I came to look because it was near my home. Gardner Symons is gone, the old mill is gone—never again can anyone find the scene that Gardner Symons painted; but somewhere that picture today is still making that vanished scene come alive as it is in my heart, and I think we may claim it for Colrain.

We have had a few writers in Colrain. Rev. Samuel Taggart published two volumes of his sermons. He preached 45 years in the Presbyterian church and served 14 years from this district in congress. We have wished he had written one volume, at least, concerning the town and people of his day and his life in Washington. The late Lorenzo Griswold wrote two books—"Priest and Puritan" and a volume of short stories, and he had many poems published in the Springfield Republican. Mrs. Adelaide Kemp is a successful magazine writer of both prose and poetry; and one of Colrain's sons, but now a resident of New Hampshire, is George William Pitt, listed in that state as one of its younger writers.

Quite a number of Colrain people have written about Colrain, and we have their books, articles and records. H. Bolton Miller many years ago began to save items of interest concerning town history and the genealogy of its old families. He loaned this collection to the late



Charles H. McClellan who, from them and with some research of his own, wrote in 1885 his "Early Settlers of Colrain" and made various addresses to the P.V.M.A.\* and to other organizations, which were printed, and so preserved this material. The late Francis M. Thompson delivered an address "The Beginnings of Colrain" at an old home week celebration there in 1904. This was printed; and a 120-page pamphlet was published in 1901 by the Catamount Hill Association.

Mrs. Fanny Bowen Shippee wrote many historical articles and poems which were published in the old Gazette and Courier and read at public meetings. Everyone who has attended the Catamount Hill reunions will remember her song—"All Hail to the Hills of Colrain." Miss Emily Davenport Stacy wrote a very interesting booklet, "The First School-house Flag"; Joseph B. Clark and Joseph Tinkham; also Rev. William H. Davenport, wrote articles about early industries and amusements of the town; and from all this group of writers I have borrowed to prepare this paper on the early and late industries of the town.

As I close I realize I have omitted some which might have been included, but the length of this paper deters me from trying to tell of every work and worker, for Colrain has been a busy town. It is something for us to remember that once on a time Colrain raised or made almost every article that was needed by its people; and nobody but cripples, the very aged and the mentally incompetent were accepting relief. It was a grand old town.

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## ALONG OLD ROADS

BY REV. DR. GAIUS GLENN ATKINS

Judge Francis Nims Thompson, whose judicious and benign activity amongst us we owe to the fact that his

\* P.V.M.A., vol. III, page 512.





local progenitor was a captive in Canada at the time of the Deerfield massacre, has given me tonight fee simple and the right of eminent domain in The Land of Reminiscence. It is a haunting country whose frontiers can never be fixed, whose landmarks are never the same for any two persons and never twice the same for any one person. Its shadows are strange and often refuse to lift, or else they shift to disclose the trivial and continue to hide the essential. It is an easy country in which to lose oneself. Its roads begin anywhere and end nowhere and often those most used are vanished altogether. Also those with whom one traveled them have become as imponderable as the roads—the rememberer and the remembered all shades together.

I came myself to New England in pursuit of an education in theology almost exactly fifty years ago. The education in theology got prematurely mislaid and I have never since been able to find it. In some ways I am, in that region and, I fear in others, much like Dr. Rufus Jones' Maine Farmer who said that his neighbors told him he had lost his mind. They might be right, he agreed, but he didn't miss it himself.

One may or should in surveying his own province of The Land of Reminiscence note the gates which open to let him through and why, and also what gates kept shut and why; and, to press the time-worn figure a little, the hinges upon which the opening gates turned. That will convert him to "predestination" or the theory of probabilities or leave him wondering—no matter; he will at least recognize the far-reaching issues of the apparently inconsequential. For a happy friendship with two classmates at Yale Divinity School opened a gate for me through which I entered upon all the subsequent course of my life.

They must have commended me to Principal Cutler of Mount Hermon—seeking a teacher to fill out a broken term. He must have concluded that for the time he could do no better, so in the dark of an early April night an old



Connecticut Valley train left me at Mount Hermon station and of an April morning I looked out a window in old Crosby hall across the valley. So I came to the heart of New England and lost to it my own heart.

I cannot easily put into any words the appeal of the region and my own complete surrender to it. That would need to be understood against my Ohio boyhood, love of nature and sensitiveness to historic associations. I had been comparatively untraveled. There was then for me no magic in the music of "Miami" and "Ohio"—there is now—but the cacophony of "Connecticut" captured my imagination.

There was a quiet beauty—I know now—in the low hills which were my first horizons, in fertile fields and the haze of summer heats. But here was something new and yet not unfamiliar. There had been a picture of the famous New Haven elms in our school geography and the local color of the series of McGuffey's readers through whose grades we climbed Parnassus was largely New England. This may in part account for the magnification of the "East" common to my Interior generation.

Ohio villages were straggling and unkempt—are still. Here were white houses in one long row set back from the elm-shaded streets and the mellowness of time—a patina of the spirit, over it all.

I have an early Mount Hermon recollection of teachers who came in to supper after a visit to the Old Deerfield museum and their exclamation over a door cut through with tomahawks. We could not wait until we saw it for ourselves. Settlers had been killed by Indians right in front of the Northfield church—at least a rude inscription on the ledge said so. We had gathered arrowheads and stone implements literally by the basketful from our Ohio fields and a family farm possessed a little mound—also there had been sudden death in the Ohio forests—but no inscriptions. All this was different, and when from time to time we went back to our parents and school friends I at least must have been unendurable





with a traveler's swagger and a spurious New England accent.

It is not far from Mount Hermon to Greenfield and presently our road led us there with half a wagon-load of furniture, a horse and a cat. Its gray stone church was beyond any dream I had ever entertained. I would not have exchanged it for Westminster Abbey, which I had never seen, but whose architecture surely could not have been better—only bigger. I am not now greatly inclined to modify that judgment. And there are no words to tell the friendships and loyalties of dear folk—old and young—men and women—who still, unseen, use the streets and consecrate the interior of the church with their spiritual presences.

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The New England of the 1890's was according to Van Wyck Brooks an Indian Summer New England whose glory was a fading leaf. It did not seem so then. We had no Brooks to tell us, though the degeneracy of the "Hill-Towns" was good for a magazine article. The most significant forces in half-hidden action were the shifting of the balance of power amongst racial strains, loss of economic and financial primacy and the slow displacement of the Yankee farmer by the peasant stock of French-Canada and Eastern Europe, and his inability to meet western competition. Such things as these were sensed but not much written or talked about.

Massachusetts, to her own economic peril was leading in social legislation for social betterment. She seemed the very essence and demonstration of Triumphant Democracy: so President Eliot told Prince Henry. Economically the corner and keystones of the New England industrial structure were the family factories. These were the conjoint creation of Yankee inventiveness and mechanical skill, water power and family faculty and inheritance. They varied of course in size, organization and specialty. Many of their names and products were



and are classic in American industry. One could have made a kind of industrial map of New England and colored it tools, shoes, woolens, cotton, skates, shaving soap, leather goods, Yankee notions, cutlery—silverware or what have you or what would you have.

Greenfield was typical, tied up with Turners Falls and Millers Falls in a sound and remunerative production of taps and dies, cutlery and silverware, cotton spinning, paper and tools. Most of these were still controlled by their founders who had built them up from very simple beginnings. Others were under the direction of the second family generation, some held and managed by the third. Not much older than that, any of them.

They had a fabulously expanding America for a market and though they were challenged by periodic "hard times" they weathered through, being well built and never over-capitalized. Their dividends were tidy, not advertised and little stock was for sale.

The income of the "first families" of the region could not, by later standards have been excessive, but they made possible a kind of living which for comfort and quiet dignity I think unmatched by any standards since. There were few marginal gadgets, but a substance of comfort and security—a good home well furnished, a good table bountifully spread, a good horse or pair, one grand tour to Europe, told over and over, a black walnut pew on the center aisle, college for the children, and a granite monument in Green River Cemetery—what more could anyone want?

Their employees were, in Greenfield, largely Yankee. Many of them had grown up with the business. Their hours were long, their wage relatively small. Joseph Griswold rather lamented the passing of the twelve-hour day and one woman employee of the Millers Falls Company, living in Greenfield, was at home week-days in daylight only about three, maybe four, months of the year. Then her employers discovered that she could take the eight o'clock train as well as the six o'clock and do





all her work just as well. But the employed owned their own homes, paid their debts and did well for their children. Emil Weisbrod told me once that he could not find a needy family in Greenfield to whom to send a Thanksgiving basket. I do not know how hard he tried, but his statement now seems a dream out of dreamland. Everybody was as independent as everybody else and yet with the inherited discipline which made the town a body politic, wise, tenacious and entirely competent for its own affairs. For the most part the population was native to the soil and drew its vital fluids from the oldest coherent social order in America. And further back—for there is an arresting correspondence between the names in Bunhill-Fields burying ground in Old London town and the names on the grave stones in all old New England burying grounds.

It is easy to idealize it all. That is the magic of roads traveled only in recollection. Their borders are forever green and they run through vales of Avalon.

An excess of individuality may become cross-grained meanness and lonely poverty engender a decadent morality. The stonewalls of what were once meadows and pastures, beginning to be lost in second growth timber, were mute witnesses of one of the bravest fights toil ever waged against an inhospitable soil, hopelessly lost. We know now that there are better ways of using that same soil and making it tributary to the economy of the commonwealth—but then there were only the stonewalls and the lilac-hidden cellar holes and the healing touch of time upon a not inglorious battle field whose tired soldiers, their warfare over, rested in a little burying ground and, having always waked early, were quite content if Gabriel delayed sounding his horn.

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Beside the joy of a preacher's first pastorate with a church of whose kindness and patience he can never say enough there remain two memories, luminous and inclusive: First an unhurried and constant communion



with out-doors—in all seasons. I walked endlessly—following the brooks up the gorges through the green mists and vernal leafage, under October tapestry, through the silence of winter's snow. We drove as endlessly, our well-bred sorrel horse knew all the roads. Marvin Fellows would leave a pair of shoes half-soled to guide us and tell us of his own boyhood in the Shelburne hills. It is all a paradox, I have never since lived so unhurried a life and yet in preaching and reading I laid the foundations of everything I have done since.

Lucius Nims' livery stable office was conveniently—no, strategically located. It commanded the street: an observation post, a rendezvous of choice spirits, a town-gossip exchange and a fragrant-with-horsiness sanctuary; New-England incarnate in the wit and wisdom, boundless kindness, the physical strength of Lucius. There we watched the passing pageant with a tide of comment which could it have been captured and made permanent would lend distinction to any historical documentation, and would perpetuate the raciness of a race. There would be some need of censorship, which would be a loss to posterity.

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It seems now all like the rivers themselves, so much has gone so much remains. The content changes, the controlling channels endure. It is still the same stream.

I cannot put into any words either the significance of it all or—one dares to use the word—the essential preciousness of it all. It had cost ten generations on American soil of courage, sacrifice, battle, labor, vision and devotion—and a thousand years of the same great qualities on English soil before it was rerooted here. It has outlasted through its own interior strength and rightness, a menacing continuity of assaults. It is ours to maintain at any cost. Its banners seen and unseen have been long in the winds, we will not lower them now to any pagan device.





MEMORIALS OF COLONIAL DAYS  
IN THE POCUMTUCK VALLEY

BY ARTHUR PEABODY PRATT, D.D.

A marker by the side of the main highway running south from Greenfield indicates the turn to Old Deerfield, and carries this legend: "OLD DEERFIELD Indian land called Pocumtuck, settled by men from Dedham in 1671. Attacked by Indians, burnt and abandoned in 1675. Reoccupied and attacked in 1704, by French and Indians, who took 47 lives, and carried off 112 captives to Canada, of whom 60 were later redeemed."\* This altogether too brief account of the happenings of those far days is of interest to us as this paper has to do with memorials of Colonial Days in the Pocumtuck Valley, and both Old Deerfield Street and the Deerfield Meadows lie at the heart of the region of our concern. While it may be well to furnish some historical background for the events commemorated by the memorials, it is not in my thought to deal with local history in any detail as all this is too well known to require extended discussion.

The memorials of the Valley have been established or erected to preserve the memory of some outstanding event or person, and to keep alive some story of heroism and sacrifice. They also serve as reminders of an obligation the present generation owes to the heroic men and women of the past, men and women whose faith and courage enabled them to carry bravely on and win the victory over almost overwhelming odds, the fruit of which it is our privilege to enjoy. It is only natural for man to take pride in great achievements and to glory in the prowess of heroes. And it is not only proper but eminently fitting to erect monuments, and to establish me-

\* "Historical Markers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony," 1930.



memorials, to preserve for posterity some record of the great and important happenings, that lessons of patriotism and faithful service may be taught. Therefore we are not surprised to discover that the idea of keeping memorials dates far into the past;—as one of the earlier Apostles wrote, “To put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them” (Epistle of St. Peter). In the Old Testament, in the Book of Esther, the people were commanded to observe days of historic moment in the life of their nation. Certain days of great significance were thus regarded: “These days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province and every city—nor the memorial of them perish.” The Passover Feast in Hebrew life, for example, which was a memorial of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, was “to be kept throughout their generation.” There were recognized “stones of memorial” and there were other stones set up as monuments to mark places and events which were not to be forgotten. So have we, in our time, set up stones, markers and tablets, erected monuments and statues, dedicated parks and buildings,—all as memorials that heroic deeds and achievements may be remembered from one generation to another. Such memorials, we believe, should be as altars before which prayer may be offered for the heroic dead, and dedication be made for heroic living.

In the year 1790 a number of the inhabitants of Boston caused to be erected on Beacon Hill a monument from a design by Charles Bulfinch, to “commemorate that train of events which led to the American Revolution and finally secured liberty and Independence to the United States.” This monument was erected on the site of the “warning beacon” which had been placed in the center of the hill, and from which this hill took its name. All this was under an order of the General Court dated March 4, 1794–5. There were four tablets in the base of this monument, each of which carried its own historic legend. It seems that the Town of Boston must have





been commercially minded about 1811, for the land on which the monument stood was sold to John Hancock and Samuel Spear, after which the highest part of the hill was dug away, the monument having been taken down and destroyed. Fortunately the four slate tablets were preserved in the State House, so that almost a century later—in 1898—when the Bunker Hill Monument Association decided to reproduce in stone an exact replica of the old monument these tablets were placed in its base. Thus has it come about that the descendants of the Puritans living in Boston, and of the Puritans who wandered far afield and settled by the Long River in the fertile valley of the Pocumtuck, may journey to Beacon Hill and read the inscriptions which are to be seen on the four sides of this interesting memorial which now stands in the State House grounds close by the thoroughfare known as Beacon Street.

So much for its history, and now let us turn to the reading of the tablet placed in the west side of the monument. "Americans—While from this eminence—Scenes of luxuriant fertility—Of flourishing commerce—And abodes of social happiness—Meet your view—Forget not those—Who by their exertions—Have secured for you—These blessings." (— indicate separate lines.) Standing today by the Beacon Monument, under the shadow of the gilded dome of the Massachusetts State House, we feel that this admonition is most pertinent, and that it is also fraught with great and grave significance. All about there is to be seen unmistakable evidence of flourishing commerce, and abodes of social happiness, while not far distant are scenes of luxuriant fertility. Surely all succeeding generations ought to make some effort to memorialize in thought and word and deed these distant benefactors.

We return now to the Old Deerfield marker in the Pocumtuck Valley, to review some local history. This marker records the fact that the Deerfield colony was settled by men from Dedham, which happening came



about on this wise. A certain plantation of some two thousand acres at Natick was granted Apostle John Eliot's "praying Indians" by the General Court in 1651. When—later—it was understood that Dedham had rights in this land the General Court in 1663 proceeded to grant to the "Proprietors of Dedham" eight thousand acres elsewhere, and two years later men from Dedham chose to accept land in that part of the colony known as "Pecumtick,"—hence the name of "Dedham Grants" as applied to the Pocumtuck settlements just beyond the Great River Quinneticot. Thus all unwittingly the "praying Indians" enter the picture, and because of this fact we will do well to take time and visit their one-time village of Natick, not far from Dedham when one travels by car. "NATICK 'A place of God's providing'"—reads the marker at the town line—"Established 1651 by the Apostle Eliot as a village for the Christian Indians from Nonantum, and governed by them and their descendants for almost a century." Here can be seen what is left of the Eliot Oak, that ancient tree by which the Indians were wont to gather and listen to the words of sacred Scripture interpreted to them by the white Apostle of God. Here is one memorial before which the visitor may well pause and give thought to that great soul who was "moved to compassion for the ignorant and depraved state" of the red man, and then devoted his life to the good of these forest children. We can picture the venerable preacher, Bible in hand, looking in kindness upon his Indian flock gathered under the spreading branches and green leaves of the white oak tree. One is reminded of Joshua, in the early history of the Hebrews, setting up a great stone by the oak in Shechem, and calling upon the people to put away strange gods and to incline their hearts unto the Lord.

Thus did it come about that men from Dedham or thereabout broke ground in Pocumtuck as early as 1669, and that for several years the affairs of the settlers were controlled from Dedham town. In 1763, as the result of





a petition to the General Court, an additional grant was made to the Pocumtuck settlement, "so that the whole be to the content of seven square miles." Some of the rough boundary stones marking the original 8,000 acre line, established in 1672, may still be found.\* One is in Greenfield on the mountain road to Montague City, near the Bear's Den Road entrance; another is on the lower side of the Ox-Bow on the South Shelburne Road. It may be noted here that in 1674 the name of Deerfield was taken by the Pocumtuck settlement, and also that there was a condition attached to the second grant made by the General Court, this condition being as follows: "Provided that within three years an able and orthodox minister be settled among them." This imposed condition was happily complied with, for in 1683 the Reverend John Williams was called to be their pastor, and they built for him a house. It is of entertaining interest to learn that this young cleric was not ordained and settled as permanent pastor until 28 months trial as preacher, thus attesting to the thoroughness of their doctrinal inquiry as to his orthodoxy!

The mention of the name of the first minister of the colony brings at once to mind that dreadful night in February, in the winter of 1704, when the settlement was sacked and burned by the Indians, and the survivors carried away through the snows to Canada. Then occurred the sad and tragic death of Eunice Williams, who fell while crossing Green River. The marker by the side of the road, in the vicinity of the Greenfield Water Works Pumping Station, records this heart-breaking happening in a simple statement of the facts: "Eunice Williams, wife of the Reverend John Williams, 'the Redeemed Captive,' was killed at this place on March 1, 1704, during the Deerfield massacre." When at last the 'redeemed captive' returned from his captivity in Canada the present John Williams house was built for him,

\* Judge Thompson showed me these stones in the course of our several tramps about Greenfield and vicinity.



a fitting welcome for the returned pastor beloved by his people, and in this house he lived until his death in June 1729. The John Williams House, now restored with additions, is a most fascinating memorial, as it stands today on the grounds of the Academy in Deerfield. The Deerfield students who find lodgement under its hospitable roof have about them a constant reminder of the heroic days of the early settlement, and also a visible symbol of the pioneer faith and persistence, and the courage and hardihood of the settlers. To live in such an atmosphere, amid such surroundings, should arouse the heroic in youth.

The visitor who walks about the Academy grounds, or along Deerfield Street, soon becomes conscious of other memorials. Not the least among these are the stately trees whose spreading branches have offered through the years protecting shade to man and nesting places for birds. These memorials of Nature are verdant reminders of the past, and to all who admire them with feelings akin to affection the following lines hold:

“Lean close and set thine ear against the bark,  
Then tell me what faint murmurous sounds are heard.”

In fact all through this region are to be seen venerable trees which have witnessed events now commemorated by tablets of stone and markers of bronze. Many of these trees are majestic in height and beautiful in symmetry, lovely in foliage possessing a kind of nobility which commands admiration. On Deerfield Street are elms and maples and buttonwoods which were there when the settlement was young. Possibly the most interesting of all is the great buttonwood which stands within the bounds of what was once the enclosure of the fort which was built in 1689, and remained until 1758. “We can well believe by its size” wrote J. R. Simmons in his “Historic Trees of Massachusetts”—“that this tree was standing at the time of the Indian Wars. What events have taken place within its shadow and close beyond!” There is





truth in this observation for near at hand stood the Stebbins house where "seven men, besides women and children, held 200 soldiers and 140 Indians at bay for three hours" on that murderous twenty-ninth of February 1703-4; and there was also the "Old Indian House" built by Ensign Sheldon in 1698.

Members of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association hardly need to be reminded that not alone is Deerfield rich in memorials of Colonial Days which should stir the heart by way of remembrance, but other regions in and about the charming Valley possess memorials both interesting and note-worthy. A few miles to the south is the scene of the Bloody Brook massacre, where Captain Lothrop and the "flower of Essex County" went down in the darkness of the ambushade of the crafty and cruel red man. And then some miles to the north, on an island in the Connecticut River, other brave and determined men, under the leadership of Captain William Turner, of Boston, avenged this tragedy in the heroic "Falls Fight" in the early morning of May 19, 1676. A monument to Captain Turner is to be seen by the French King Road near the end of the bridge to Turners Falls, which spans the river at this point and overlooks the scene of this daring exploit. Sites of four early forts, which guarded the way to the north, are indicated by roadside markers in the town of Bernardston.

Our real interest, however, must continue in the Valley of the Pocumtuck which extends westward from Deerfield, and in the highway which bears the historic name of The Mohawk Trail. The Trail road starts from Greenfield, and continues in a westerly direction over and among the hills, to find itself again in the river valley some miles beyond. What is now Shelburne was in colonial days included in a tract granted Deerfield in 1712, in "the unappropriated land of the Province—9 miles west, to the western woods." This was sometimes called the "Deerfield Pasture" and the first actual settlements were established here in or about 1752. The out-



standing memorials of this region are the everlasting hills which look down upon the valleys, so quiet today, but which in the yesterdays of our thinking beheld the coming and the going of the dreaded Mohawks, as well as witnessing the ravages of the Pocumtucks. Continuing on beyond Shelburne Falls this valley road soon brings us into Charlemont, a town which early acquired the modern habit of frequently changing its name. Here was one of the "Townships" granted by the General Court in 1735 to the Town of Boston, and was known as "Boston Township No. 1." When this grant was later purchased by two men named Chickley and Keyes it was called Chickley's Town, then Charley Mont, and later Charley's Mont. Since 1740 it has born its present name of Charlemont, but the names of one of the early owners is perpetuated in the Chickley Alp, and in the river which bears his name.

There are not many permanent memorials in these parts, but the observant traveler journeying through Charlemont on the Mohawk Trail is sure to see a certain massive buttonwood tree at the foot of a hill close by the roadside. A spring of sparkling water is near its base. This tree is impressive in its own right, rising as it does to a height of almost 100 feet, a distinguished landmark at all seasons of the year. It may be considered in the nature of a memorial since here at the foot of the tree slept Captain Moses Rice, the first pioneer settler, when he came to take possession of the land he had purchased for himself and family. This was in 1743, and not far away on the side of the hill above Captain Rice finally perished at the hands of the Indians in 1755. Markers placed as memorials note some of these facts, and there are tablets indicating the sites of the rude forts—Taylor and Rice and Hawks—which were built to protect the inhabitants of these parts. Surely here is a valley teeming with interest.

We now return in thought to Boston and the Beacon Monument. In Colonial days any journey from Boston





or Dedham to the settlements in the far-off Pocumtuck country required several days of arduous and uncomfortable travel. The rough roads followed earlier trails, and peril lurked in the shadows. The trip from Boston to Deerfield may be made today over hard-surfaced highways and in cars designed for comfort and speed, and it requires but a few hours to cover the distance. Old names are given the east-west routes, and over the Boston Post Road or the Concord Turnpike the traveler passes through busy cities and through towns with shaded streets. The roads lead into pleasant countryside, and by fields and wood, and past farms where life is quietly lived. Here and there are to be seen markers of stone and bronze, memorials touching on a past out of which the present has come. The same hills that looked down upon the coming and the going of the Red men and upon the scenes of the early settler, stand today continuing their silent witnessing of the changing life of the people. The abiding hills about which and over which went the trails of the Indians, later carried the narrow and twisted roads of pioneer settlers. Rugged men and women, strong of faith and heart, conquered the wilderness. They overcame all obstacles because the venture that was theirs depended more surely on their souls than on their crude tools and weapons. A goodly store of hope was ever among their necessary commodities. We like to think of them as being willing to sacrifice comforts, even their all, for the beliefs they held and for their faith, and for the right to hold both of these. Our fitting recognition of such faith and courage should be in maintaining intact the free institution they founded.

It is a source of real satisfaction to all who cherish memorials that the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, established in Old Deerfield, faithfully, happily and with thoroughness acts as custodian and historian of the outstanding memorial of this region. This organization links the events of a far yesterday with the present, and has arranged to pass its memorials, its records and



its relics on from generation to generation, and for this happy interest the people should be truly grateful. Other memorials there are about us, as the early adventures in living in a new country have left their peculiar mark; crumbling chimney piles, boards weathered silver gray, some old door-stone by which lilacs grow, and a grass-grown depression in the earth. How eloquently would these homely memorials speak of the simple and humble life of their day, were such power bestowed upon them. They would tell also of high adventure and sweet romance, of tragedy and heroism, and of suffering and death nobly met. There is something splendid and heartening in the story of pioneer persistence; truly they now rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.

Churches of the faith of our fathers are to be seen as we travel through the valley and across the hills of the Deerfield country. Simple landmarks to many a tourist today—or, perhaps, a guide to the Inn just beyond! To our Puritan forefathers the church was a memorial—the meeting house where they went regularly to meet and to worship the Lord God Omnipotent. Its white spire still points upward, a reminder of the pioneers' staunch and steadfast and simple belief in the sovereignty of God and the awfulness of sin. Memorials of such a religious faith should impress upon our day the fact that abiding trust in God was the bed-rock of their character. Stern creeds were theirs, but these were after all an admirable discipline for a pioneer country.

Today we know the Pocumtuck Valley country as a place of charm, and we love it. We love its vistas of sunlit green fields and pastures, of tree-clad hills and valleys, the plowed land of its farms, its home-life and its industry. The memorials and the permanent monuments kindle within us strong and deep veneration of our democratic institutions, and altogether we are impressed by the scene and the history behind it all. Highly should we resolve to "forget not those who by their exertion have secured for (us) these blessings."





# POCUMTUCK VALLEY MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

## REPORT

This is the fourth of the "annuals" which will constitute Volume IX of our "History and Proceedings." Each contains original matter edited and published in a limited edition under a vote by the corporation.

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It is the purpose of these annual publications to make our papers on local biography, history and happenings available to members of our association and all others who are interested in the Old Deerfield region.

FRANCIS NIMS THOMPSON, *President*;  
W. HERBERT NICHOLS, *Treasurer*.

Memorial Hall,  
Deerfield, Mass.



## SEVENTY-SECOND ANNUAL MEETING—1942

*In the Council Room at Memorial Hall on the twenty-fourth of February—a clear, cool winter day—members of the P.V.M.A. held their annual meeting. Following reading and approval of the record kept by Margaret Harris Allen, recording secretary, tributes were paid to two former councilors who had died during the past year. Reuben L. Lurie of Boston spoke with feeling of the work of Herbert C. Parsons, editor and social worker; and a paper on the life and characteristics of Miss Margaret Miller, written by Margaret C. Whiting, was read by Mrs. Gertrude Cochrane Smith.*

*The officers and councilors\* of the association were reelected and Mrs. Mary Adams Ball was elected to fill the unexpired term of Miss Miller as a councilor. The trustees\* were also reelected. President Thompson reported on behalf of the executive committee and Mrs. Allen gave the report by the curators of the Frary House estate.*

*Harry W. Fay of New Salem then spoke on the man-made lake which gives his town some 25 miles of shore and furnishes Greater Boston with water; briefly reviewing town history from a time when New Salem was the largest in the county in population to its present superiority in area.*

*This was followed by reports on the origins, accomplishments and aims of two historical societies in our county. Mrs. Hunting of New Salem contributed the story of the formation of the Swift River Valley Historical Society; and an account of the large and valuable historical collection at Orange, prepared by Grace French Weymouth, its curator, was read by Judge Thompson. He also read parts of a valuable paper containing reminiscences by Reverend D. H. Strong of*

\*Listed on page 279.



It is the purpose of this journal to present to the medical profession a concise and accurate summary of the progress of medicine in all its branches. It is the policy of the Association to publish only original and reliable material, and to exclude all that is purely speculative or of doubtful value. The journal is published in English and French, and is sent free of charge to all members of the Association. It is also available to non-members at a special rate. The subscription price for 1914 is \$5.00 in advance. Single copies may be ordered at 15 cents each. The journal is published by the American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

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Buckland, presented during the past year at the request of our president.

*At the Council meeting* reports of treasury and trust funds were made by Treasurer Nichols; Mr. Coffin reported for the auditors, commending the clarity of the accounting; the reports were accepted. The auditors and all committee members were reappointed.\* In view of war conditions and the greater security of the east wing, the council authorized the temporary removal of the "Old Indian House" door to that wing and voted that the executive committee might transfer other objects in its discretion.

*In the town hall* the supper furnished by the women of Deerfield was of the usual excellent quality and abundant quantity. The New England home cooking and the harmonious voices of the Glee Club of Deerfield Academy, as directed by Ralph H. Oatley, are highly appreciated by the audience which gathers each year to hear the historical papers presented in the evening.

Reverend Margaret B. Barnard of Greenfield spoke of her service and experience as a minister in our county and elsewhere; Miss Minnie Ellen Hawks, who has often read to the association the papers written by others, contributed a delightful paper on her own secluded region west of the Deerfield river; and Judge Thompson, "yielding to the requests of many" old-timers, placed upon the record many merry tales of no importance and much repetition. The meeting dissolved at 9.30 p. m., the usual closing-time in recent years.

\*Listed on page 279.



## REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Attendance at Memorial Hall was over 2,700, somewhat greater than in the previous year. Though I predicted that the general public would be more interested in Frary House than in a museum, the two appear to be visited by about equal numbers. The Sheldon Collection has received hair wreaths and other articles from Mrs. J. C. Woodard, Mrs. A. M. Robinson and Adelia Hobart; and there have been gifts to the library which include the Denio Genealogy, two volumes of Vital Records and the Memorial History of Boston. Rev. D. H. Strong of Buckland has given us his reminiscences in writing, including interesting recollections of Franklin County ministers. Miss Whiting contributed valuable historical notes and copies of town records of Hatfield made by Miss Margaret Miller, with her Deerfield note-book and essays by her mother Mrs. Silvanus Miller.

We have been rather sharply criticised by some persons who wished to use, at their own convenience and without previous notice, the treasures of our library and its manuscripts. We admit the desirability of a librarian and our inability to pay for one. The third floor of the east wing has become a portrait gallery by accretion rather than by planning; and as its ceiling and walls need refinishing it may be well to select a committee of vigilantes to then properly hang the subjects. Some changes in contents of the cases there might be made at that time.

R. Stanley Reid of Greenfield has presented us with several large showcases, which are being filled by various of our smaller exhibits. This has improved the appearance of the first floor of the east wing. Under the stairs there I have placed another long glass case, in which I am putting Thompson and Adams, Nims and Amadon, relics, including a pine light-stand which belonged to





the little dressmaker of the "Jolly Good Times," stories, and latter to the "Lois Whitaker" of those tales by Mary P. Wells Smith. We need more glass cases; and to one or two people who have considered making donations of small objects I have suggested that these were necessary for the protection and exhibition of their gifts.

Mrs. Biddle reported gifts during 1941 which included a copy of the Denio Genealogy and other volumes of value, and Mrs. Alice W. Garman presented an interesting cobbler's box and tools and expressed an intent to send us copies of plays written by her aunt Miss Margaret Miller.

Attention has been given by your executive committee to the trees at Memorial Hall and Frary House, and during 1942 two or three may be removed for the good of others. The hall is likely to require some repairs, and much might be done along several lines if our income was sufficient. We have received circular letters of inquiry as to our preparation for possible air raids, and I shall call that subject to the attention of the council today. We may expect that fewer people will view our exhibits while the shortage of rubber continues.

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## REPORT BY THE CURATORS OF FRARY HOUSE

BY MARGARET HARRIS ALLEN

Frary House was open for its second season from the last of April to the middle of October, when the rooms became too cold for anyone's comfort.

Unfortunately, Mrs. Bertha Arms, the caretaker, passed away very suddenly early in the Spring. However, we were able to enlist the aid of several people in keeping the house open. The threat of a gasoline



shortage affected the tourist travel the last part of the season.

In spite of these difficulties, however, our total income has shown an increase over that of the previous year.

We are glad to report that every window in Frary House (of which there are dozens) has been properly puttied and painted. They were in very bad condition.

The serious state of world affairs makes the problems of Frary House seem of very small importance. It seems quite possible that the number of our guests during the war will be sharply reduced. However, we will carry on as best we may.

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## MARGARET MILLER

BY MARGARET C. WHITING

The Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association has lost an important member, for Margaret Miller, who died last July, was genuinely concerned in its interests during her many years of connection with it, and was troubled lately by the evidence of its flagging energy. By nature she was well fitted to understand the value of traditions and the need of preserving them, and to her personal gift for collecting and sifting their significant elements she added a literary talent that presented them with charm. From this store she contributed freely and her generous response to requests for help in the annual program is remembered by us all. Hers was a constant interest in the Association. Beginning in her youth a visit to Deerfield and especially to Memorial Hall was one of her particular pleasures. She early made acquaintance with Mr. Sheldon and Miss Baker who recognized in her a true enthusiasm for the society, the place, and the history that made both the village and the P.V.M.A. a unique combination. Though





loyal to Hatfield, her Mother's home, she felt a deeper regard for this town in its more important relation to the whole Connecticut Valley, and her most personal satisfaction was found in her own connection with this village. In frequent consultation with Mr. Sheldon, whose writings she admired, she was able to give him help, and she enjoyed the tasks he set for her.

Hers was no slavish admiration and she held stoutly to her own conception of the place the Association should occupy in the community. While she was secretary she proposed a free admission to the Hall for the townspeople, and met the strong opposition of the President who marked his disagreement by demoting her from her office! Margaret never retracted her opinion, but she was not a fighter, and there was no hard feelings on either side. She continued to make for Mr. Sheldon's birthday the big loaf of sponge cake that was like his Mother's, as long as he lived, and it was always graciously accepted and eaten by him. It was her annual custom to pay a special visit to Mrs. Sheldon, on that birthday anniversary as evidence of her lasting admiration for his remarkable talents.

It is in the light of this love for old history, and because of her especial love of Deerfield that Margaret Miller deserves remembrance. She was a true daughter of New England. Yankee to the backbone, her qualities largely partook of the inheritance from her Mother's people, the Waits, the Gerrys, the Graves, all first settlers of Hatfield,—good Indian fighters too, for we have not forgotten Ben Wait and his grim courage. Though Margaret's father, Silvanus Miller 2nd, was of old Long Island and early New York origin, and her Mother, Mary Esther Graves Miller, was possessed of a spiritual and intellectual culture that knew no sectional boundaries, Margaret was so firmly rooted in the soil of New England that she displayed her immediate family upbringing only in superficial ways. Unlike her two sisters and brothers she was from first to last a New Englander.



It was a pity she did not find her special gift for historical research in her youth. After her school days the family interest in art, and her devotion to her next older sister Ellen, lead her into choosing the serious study of wood engraving as a profession. There were many engravers among their friends. In the early eighteen-eighties this was a reproductive art emerging into the position of original work along with etching and lithography, a movement largely influenced by Elbridge Kingsley, the one genius Hatfield may claim as hers. He was a lifelong friend of the family, and it was a natural choice for Margaret, who had a pretty gift for drawing, to spend two laborious and happy winters in New York studying wood engraving at Cooper Union. Unfortunately, just as she had attained a considerable degree of skill, the cheap method of plate engraving for illustrative use was developed and cutting pictures on wood blocks for printing was abandoned as a profession. Margaret had spent two years on this difficult task of technical education exactly at the hour of its doom.

Probably she would have failed to use her acquired accomplishment, for the continual use of the microscope necessary in cutting a fine line, caused a muscular strain of the eyes, and for a good many years she was much hampered by this weakness.

Returning to Hatfield Margaret's other secondary gift, that of writing, claimed her efforts, and she contributed short articles (always about old times) to *The New York Tribune* and the *New York Evening Post* two literary-minded newspapers that had long published her Mother's charming essays.

As her eyes permitted Margaret then began a long and faithful study of the early records of Hatfield. It was a work that involved much toil, deciphering the crabbed and ill-spelled records of the early town officials, a labor that also brought her much pleasure. She delighted in the quaint glimpses of Yankee character the simple entries of town happenings revealed, and





to trace from year to year the interplay of character they disclosed was reward enough.

From childhood Margaret had made many friends among the old people of the village, going regularly to sit with them to listen to their stories of their lives, tales she never forgot, and which sometimes oddly illuminated the confused records of the town scribes, by hitching together their disconnected facts. Her regard for these favorite friends was shown in the party for her eleventh birthday which she celebrated with a group of old ladies all over eighty years of age,—“one of the nicest parties” she ever enjoyed, she would recollect.

From the serious examination of the old records, and in their old verbal narratives the papers Margaret prepared for the P.V.M.A. annual meetings were derived. Begun in the hope of writing the town history, a task for which she was peculiarly well fitted, the project was only abandoned from lack of personal funds and the complete apathy of the town towards helping in its publication, our association was better able to recognize her value both as a writer and historian.

It cannot be denied that Margaret Miller too easily accepted discouragement of her efforts. It was a trait that often obscured or hampered the play of her gifts. She did not lack belief in herself; she knew the worth of what she could do, but, like other New Englanders of talent in her generation, the cold wind of criticism withered her ambition for personal effort. Perhaps it was the need of losing self-consciousness, that peculiar inheritance from the Puritan past which has so often dogged the later Yankees, which caused Margaret to turn to writing a series of charming little sketches of country folk ways in the impersonal form of plays. She showed a considerable sense of stage craft in their composition, and professional actors have praised their acting quality. As the short episodes, cleverly developed by a group of Yankees in excellent dialog, Margaret's delineation of character is particularly successful, and



her sly humor and sudden turns of wit that belonged to her nature, give a flavor to the situations she portrays. Pulling the strings of her imaginary people, safe behind the scenes, Margaret's writing in these short plays has a freedom and ease, that shows how self-forgetfulness was necessary to her full expression.

This, also, Margaret once showed in a surprising manifestation of her fundamental character, and here we touch on a quality only her intimates knew, her colonial patriotism and fiery political traits that her ancestry on both sides reveal in her family history were implanted in Margaret's very nature, and in her strong opinions about national politics she never wavered or gave ground to opposition. Here, also, she attained complete freedom. Deep in her being the spirit of the Indian fighter Ben Wait must have stirred when, deeply perturbed by local affairs, she wrote a series of six doggerel lampoons about Deerfield's political conditions, and, encouraged by the editor Mr. Parsons, published them in the *Greenfield Gazette*, between the years 1901 and 1905. They produced a considerable excitement though now forgotten along with the unhappy circumstances that caused them, but their anonymity was successfully preserved until now, who, looking at the quiet, blue-eyed woman, who never spoke in public, nor spoke freely at any time, could connect her with the coarse satire and common phraseology that was used with such effect. They had an effect at the time, but are only brought into notice now as a necessary item in this appraisal of Margaret Miller's character.

Outwardly, she lived a simple life of a well-bred country woman. She was interested in birds and their habits, she liked to do a little gardening, she enjoyed long walks and she loved both cats and dogs. She busied herself in all the ways of pleasant living, with an occasional visit to her New York relations, she returned to her village with renewed enjoyment. After the Miller family removed from Hatfield to make their home in





the fine old Nims House on Deerfield Street in 1893, the strongest wish of Margaret's heart was fulfilled. Everything that belonged to Deerfield was dear to her, and the dimming of her interest in her latest years did not abate her affection for the village and the P.V.M.A.

And so, at the age of 77 Margaret Miller died, the last of her immediate family, and one of the last representatives also of the old cultivated country-loving New Englanders whose ancestors made their homes the center of their lives, and whose talents were used when required, but whose daily tasks were their chief concern.

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## THE SWIFT RIVER VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BY BEATRICE A. FAY HUNTING, LIBRARIAN

I have been asked to write something about the origin, aims and accomplishments of the Swift River Valley Historical Society, and it seems fitting to begin with a brief sketch of the life of the Society's founder, Dr. Frederick H. Thompson, who died at his home in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, December 14, 1939 at the age of 95 years and four months. He founded the New Salem Historical Society in 1932. In 1935 it became the Swift River Valley Historical Society.

On August 5, 1844 there was joy in New Salem in the large colonial farmhouse of Captain Clark Thompson and his wife, Nancy, for to them was born a son, whom they named Frederick Henry. The boy was a great-grandson of one of the early settlers, James Thompson, who had located in New Salem with his family about 1770. When only 12 years of age we find Frederick and his older sister, Elisa, enrolled as students at New Salem Academy,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles from their home, and boarding themselves during the week at the home of Mrs. Horton near the Academy.



Frederick Thompson, after two or three years of study at New Salem Academy, transferred to Phillips Exeter Academy, graduating there in 1861 with President's Lincoln son, Tad, for a classmate. He was enrolled at Harvard in the class of 1865 but, like many other young men of that time, he enlisted for service in the Civil War. He was soon discharged, however, because the army surgeons did not consider him strong enough. In 1864 and '65 he attended Amherst College and in 1870 was graduated from the Harvard Medical School after serving an internship at the Massachusetts General Hospital. In 1870, also, Dr. Thompson married Miss Harriet Fiske Howes of Petersham and began the practice of medicine in the town of Lancaster, but four years later, in 1874, he went to Fitchburg where the remainder of his long life was spent.

Although only his boyhood days had been spent in New Salem and none of the Thompson family remained there, Dr. Thompson retained a great love for his native town and frequently came back to visit his birthplace and to renew old acquaintances at the New Salem Academy reunions held annually on the third Thursday of August. At the reunions Dr. Thompson and other prominent alumni were often called upon to speak and on a number of occasions he spoke on a subject in which he was greatly interested—the need for a Historical Society in New Salem in order to preserve historical documents and relics.

Dr. Thompson, who at that time was 88 years of age and handicapped by extreme deafness, was present at the Academy Reunion held on August 18, 1932 and again spoke on the subject of the New Salem Historical Society. He said "The towns of the Swift River Valley are to be acquired by the Commonwealth in the development of an adequate future water supply for the needs of the Metropolitan Water District. If these towns of the Swift River Valley are to die that the Metropolitan Water District may live, should not there





be erected a Memorial Building, (fire proof), in memory of said towns, which shall contain suitable tablets in their memory, and shall be a depository for all their historical records, historical relics, genealogies, etc.

"If such a building is to be erected, will not New Salem, a renowned educational centre of this region for many generations past, be the logical place where it should be located, and is this not an additional reason why the New Salem Historical Society should be organized immediately and incorporated so that it may plan, locate, erect, furnish, and administer this Memorial Building?"

As a result of Dr. Thompson's enthusiasm, the president of the New Salem Academy Alumni Association appointed a committee, which met at the close of the exercises to confer with Dr. Thompson about forming the society and decided to call a meeting on Friday, August 26, which all people interested were invited to attend.

At that meeting it was voted to form the New Salem Historical Society. After much discussion a constitution was adopted and signed by 17 persons who were present. A nominating committee to prepare a list of officers was chosen and the meeting adjourned until September 3, 1932, when Dr. Thompson was elected the first president of the new society with Harry W. Fay, vice-president; Mrs. Geneva S. Ballard, secretary; Alba D. Paige, treasurer and Mrs. Hazel Stowell, librarian, these officers also comprising the executive committee. According to the constitution the society was to have two regular meetings a year, the annual meeting on the third Thursday of June and the other on the third Thursday of November.

The first regular meeting of the New Salem Historical Society was held on November 17, 1932 and the new society was fully launched with 44 names signed to the charter membership list, although one of those who signed at the organization meeting in August had al-



ready passed away. In response to an invitation from the executive committee of the New Salem Society a number of members of the Prescott Society were present at this meeting. Dr. Thompson spoke regarding his idea of a fireproof memorial building to commemorate the towns,—Prescott, Dana, Greenwich, Enfield and New Salem to be taken wholly or in part by the State.

During 1934 the interest in Dana concerning a larger historical organization was manifested when ten Dana people attended the June meeting of the New Salem Society. At the November meeting of that year President Thompson brought in plans showing three designs for a Memorial Building which had been drawn by a Fitchburg firm of architects, and there was much hope that a Memorial Building for the Swift River Valley towns might some day become a reality.

However, difficulties arose in the path of the proposed larger society and the proposed Memorial Building. In accordance with a suggestion, there had been appointed a "Committee of Five" with a member from each of the five Valley towns affected by the building of the Quabbin Reservoir in order to get the towns together for the formation of the Swift River Valley Historical Society, which was the only name proposed for the new organization. But Enfield, many miles away at the lower end of the Reservoir, showed little or no interest in a project so far away and appeared to be looking toward its near neighbor, Belcher-town. And even Prescott, which had once voted to join us, and would have done so if it had been a union of only the New Salem and Prescott Societies, wished to keep their name intact and not lose their identity in a Swift River project. The Prescott Society also decided that they had sufficient funds to maintain their own organization and after a time became incorporated.

In June 1935 the New Salem Historical Society voted





to become incorporated. As there were already members from other towns in the valley it was voted that the society be incorporated with the name "Swift River Valley Historical Society." The final meeting of the New Salem Historical Society took place on Nov. 21, 1935 and on the same date the first meeting of the Swift River Valley Historical Society was held. Dr. Thompson was chosen to be the first president of the new Swift River Valley Historical Society and was able to be present at the first annual meeting in June 1936 when he was made honorary president for the rest of his life.

The New Salem selectmen had allowed the town hall to be used for the historical meetings, but for several years the society had no place to keep the few historical treasures which came into its possession. However, when the town acquired a new town hall and moved into it in 1939, it was possible to rent the old town hall and the Swift River Valley Historical Society is now using it for its collection. Although the old town hall is slightly more than a century old and of wooden construction, it is in good condition, and we are fortunate in also having the use of its good sized fire-proof vault. We have acquired a sign for the front of the building and now feel that we really have a home.

Our collection is growing and we are beginning to be quite proud of our acquisitions, which include interesting articles from all the five Valley towns. A little more than a year ago we bought some second hand show-cases so that we are now able to display small articles to better advantage. Among the articles which we have acquired are an old desk from Herrick's Tavern in New Salem and a sign from the old Ballard Tavern in Wendell, which remind one of stage coach days, while a hat and a cap of braided palmleaf are reminders of the days when New Salem had the largest population of any town in Franklin County and the braiding of hats was one of the leading industries.



Relatives of the late Capt. Wm. B. Kimball of Enfield gave us his Civil War sword and many interesting documents. A Revolutionary War drum is a Dana relic, and among interesting articles from North Dana are records of a Good Templars Society, which once flourished there. From Prescott is an old cemetery gate with hand wrought iron work. The town of Greenwich gave its library to the town of New Salem and with it came articles for the Historical Society. We have many town reports of Dana, Greenwich and Prescott, as well as New Salem, and hope that these files may some day be complete.

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## THE ORANGE HISTORICAL COLLECTION

BY GRACE FRENCH WEYMOUTH

Greetings from our Mount Grace Chapter D. A. R. Historical Rooms. We are all so familiar with your wonderful Memorial Hall, its collection and historic Old Deerfield, that it is almost with humility we send this requested outline of our own society.

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The old Orange Historical and Antiquarian Society, organized Nov. 12, 1895, recorded the names of four influential men and four influential women whose object was "to collect and preserve historical data and antiquities illustrative of the manner of life of the earliest settlers of the town of Orange, and rescue from oblivion any historical matter that otherwise would be lost." A room in the basement of the old town hall was the first home. The society flourished for some years collecting relics of much value and records of especial historic interest to the town.

When the Wheeler Memorial Library was built, Mrs. Wheeler gave the use of the north side of the lower





floor to the society and in 1914 their relics were moved to the new quarters.

A few years before the death of the president of the society, which occurred at the age of 82 years in 1923, the place was closed, the majority of the members having passed away.

In the fall of 1923, through the efforts of Miss Phoebe Lee Hosmer, regent of Mount Grace Chapter D. A. R., permission was given the members to look over the collection and note the condition. In spite of the general air of neglect, dust and cobwebs, we soon realized this wealth of relics should be under constant care.

Five living members of the old society were found, and Jan. 1, 1924 they willingly gave our chapter sponsorship to take up the task so well begun, with ownership when we were able to raise funds to protect these relics of Orange by incorporation.

This work was taken up as a matter of conservation.

By inventory the relics and records numbered 782, and our aims were the same as the original society.

We changed the name to Mount Grace Chapter D. A. R. Historical Rooms, and after renovation and re-arrangement we were ready for public inspection Jan. 28, 1924. From the beginning new exhibits began pouring in, all historical data being constantly sought; but not until Sept. 16, 1931 were we able to become sole owners by incorporation.

Our work is outstanding. When any data either historical or genealogical is wanted we are usually able to supply authentic information, and our requests come from every state in the union, and until this present war, included foreign countries.

Our work with the schools, from grade four through and including the High School, we feel is of much benefit in the knowledge gained first hand of Colonial life, and no admission is charged to groups accompanied by instructors. The same privilege is given the Scouts.



We weathered the disastrous flood of 1936 with many losses that never can be replaced. One sad feature was losing of ten years' work on the "History of South Orange;" ready for its final checking up before publication, and a sodden mass of blank paper when rescued from the files.

The year 1937 brought to us by will the Emma Fitts Bradford collection of over 500 exhibits and records of great value, and outstanding are American marked pewter and early lights not many small societies can boast of. This donation was the final factor in removing to a larger, higher and dryer quarters, and when the hurricane and flood of 1938 brought terror to all our hearts we realized our good fortune.

Each month brings us new exhibits and rare finds and today we number more than 5000 relics. Only by personal inspection can one realize the extent and value of what we have.

The two floors in the barn are open from April 1st to Nov. 1st, but the house is open the year round.

The Orange Historical Society is in the process of formation and when our year ends late in April our chapter will doubtless vote to place our collection in its keeping, with the same aims the old society passed on to us. The collection has grown to such an extent that our small chapter membership feel the financial burden too great and that a broader society should be formed with a large and active membership, including both men and women.





## DEERFIELD WEST OF THE RIVER

BY MINNIE ELLEN HAWKS

By the Dedham Grant in 1665, the seven miles square grant in 1673—which by some quite incomprehensible system of measurement added about seventy square miles to its territory,—and by the additional grant in 1712 which extended its boundaries “nine miles from the Connecticut River into the western woods,” the originally little settlement of Deerfield on the Pocumtuck had expanded its land tenure from the Connecticut on the east to the Northfield line on the north, the Ashfield line on the west, and the Whately line on the south. All this in less than fifty years from an 8000-acre beginning was doing very well—in addition. It should be said that these dates and data, as well as many others in the following pages, are from Mr. Sheldon’s “History of Deerfield.”

Then in 1753 the subtraction began with the setting off of Greenfield. In 1767 Deerfield Southwest petitioned for separation, and became Conway; and in the following year Deerfield Northwest was incorporated as the town of Shelburne. All this took away a large part of the Deerfield holdings westward from the Deerfield River. But there was left a section which in size did not suffer too much in comparison with the original Dedham Grant. Why it was not called “Deerfield West” to agree with the “Deerfield Northwest” and “Deerfield Southwest” terminology I cannot say.

Deerfield west of the river is hilly and much wooded beyond the narrow strip of river meadow land. It is bounded on the west, south and east by the Deerfield River. The border line of Shelburne runs across the north, and also marks the boundary part of the way on the eastern side. The line here is very irregular. At one place there is a very decided indentation into Deerfield territory,—a good big *jog*, in Yankee vernacular. That is because a man by the name of Taylor, whose farm



was on the border, much preferred to be a citizen of Shelburne, and those who were responsible for running the line respected his preference by bending the line so that his farm might lie in the town of his choice. I have always wanted to know what his reasons were for liking Shelburne better than Deerfield, but the story does not say. They have become lost in the past—irrevocably, I am sure. But the *jog* is still there to testify to the obliging disposition of some legislative body of long ago.

Deerfield, west of the river, has three ranges of hills extending in a general north and south direction. The first range, which forms the western horizon line as seen from Old Deerfield, plunges steeply to the river in the vicinity of Stillwater and sweeps to the north, culminating in Deerfield in Arthur's Seat, and stretching on into Shelburne and Greenfield. Arthur's Seat is 965 feet high, according to the latest topographical map. That is considerably higher than East Mountain, Pocumtuck, Old Deerfield's eastern rampart. The view is not very extensive except toward the northeast, where Monadnock lifts its symmetrical mass, and southeast to the Holyoke range. The hills west, northwest, and southwest are too high and too close to allow a distant prospect. These are the Sunsick Hills of the Indians. Viewed from across the river, they lift their slopes, drenched in sunshine, sharply outlined against the sky or brushed over with the lovely hazes of the varying seasons. I suspect the Red Man felt their beauty much as we do—that he, too, lifted his eyes to the hills.

The middle range is not visible from Old Deerfield, and contains no peak of particular note. It rises high; however, and at a point somewhat southwest of Arthur's Seat has an elevation of 821 feet, according to the map. It, too, drops abruptly to the river approximately north of Hoosac Hill in Conway. From the top of an unnamed hill at the southern end of this range there is a really fine prospect. Spread out before one are the uplands of Shelburne, the deep river valley stretching off to the





northwest, the hills of Conway rising on and on toward the higher Berkshires, Mount Tom and the whole blue line of the Holyoke range, Mount Toby, and of course Pocumtuck. The hill is very easy of access, and a good many people enjoy the outlook in the summer and fall. It is not very high, 500 feet or so, but it seems to be in a very commanding position.

The third range slopes to the river where it comes down from Hoosick Tunnel and Whitingham. It is lower than the others and on the western side rougher and steeper. Deer seem to like it, and apparently its ragged slopes are in good favor with foxes. Not much of this range is in Deerfield, for the Shelburne line cuts across it.

Where there are hills there must be the complement of brooks in the valleys between. Of these Shingle Brook, farther west, and what we have always called the Andrews Brook are the largest, both flowing south and meeting the river west of the bend at the head of Stillwater. Shingle Brook comes down from the country north of Shingle Hill, which is just across the line in Shelburne. Years ago, when such things were around about, there was on the little stream a mill for sawing out shingles. The mill and its site have long since vanished, but the name is an abiding reminder. The brook, in the last half-mile or so before it joins the river, plunges over a ledge some forty to fifty feet high into a deep, boulder-strewn ravine, making a sight worth seeing at all times, and particularly at high water—then *white water* there. The Andrews Brook has its origin in the Old World valley. There is nothing especially noteworthy about it that I know of. It just flows "to join the brimming river." I suppose there used to be trout in these brooks; but nowadays, with the over-numerous fishermen, they are very few and far between.

Two roads run the length of West Deerfield north and south—the "Lower Road," along where the hills come



down to the meadow land; and the "Upper Road," half or three quarters of a mile west up in the hills. Toward the northern end the old Albany Road starts its climb across Shelburne Mountains. This road was freely used in older days. Now, while not discontinued, it has not been kept up and is not to be recommended for automobiles. It goes through picturesque country, however. In the southern part, a road branches off from the Upper Road to the west through the hills perhaps two miles and a half to South Shelburne. At one place it is built through a swamp—black muck and brown water, and a sort of jungle growth of underbrush and vines and trees standing and fallen. The road used to go around the south end of the swampland; but the grades were very steep and the distance considerable; so, in spite of the difficulties, it was finally carried straight across. At first there was a corduroy road, then stone and gravel, but always there has been a struggle to keep it above the swamp water on both sides.

Some years ago, while a digging was in process in this swamp for some purpose, lengths of wood which had been cut by beavers were brought to light. The teeth marks were plainly discernible. Also, if memory serves me correctly, an Indian dug-out canoe was found, buried no one knows how long. These relics of an era long gone by disintegrated quickly when exposed to the air; but they gave irrefutable testimony as to the ancient history of that particular spot.

Roads of course are corollary to settlements. Mr. Sheldon, in his "History," does not tell much about Deerfield, West, beyond some description of its physical characteristics. There were apparently no settlers across the river in the early days of Deerfield. The reason is obvious. The only hope of approximate safety anywhere in the region during the years from 1665 to about 1750 was in fairly compact settlements, where a certain community of defense was possible. Men needed to have their backs to friends for mutual protection, as





in Old Deerfield. So the settlement did not jump the river, in spite of the fact that there was a strip of good rich meadow land just on the other side. I think it is safe to say that homesteads were not established west of the river until the danger of attack by the Indians was almost assuredly past, and that must have been toward the close of the French and Indian wars. The treaty with France in 1748, which gave to the English all the disputed territory in the north land, removed the menace of the Red Men, which for long and terrible years had hung like a dark cloud over the northern and western hills. With the feeling of security came the impulse to dare the dangers of scattered settlement. This daring was not foolhardiness; for certainly there has come down to us no story in history or legend of any attack by the Indians on a settler's home west of the river.

Who the bold man was who first set up his household gods in the western wilderness I have not yet discovered. Mr. Sheldon, in his genealogical record, has the disconcerting habit of using the expression "settled in Wisdom" or "removed to Wisdom" without giving any dates. Also I don't know where the first house was built. The region was apparently all wooded. At any rate, the grant and boundary documents quoted in the "History" mention continually "the western woods." The men who settled there had to clear their lands, and that was plain hard work and drudgery. In so far did they have a more laborious task than their fellow townspeople on the open, rich meadow lands around Old Deerfield. The beautiful great trees—absolutely primeval forest—had to be cut down, piled, and burned. It sounds to us now like a wicked waste; but they had no alternative, for of course there was no sale for lumber. After that came the back-breaking task of getting rid of the stumps. We see the fair fields now and forget the toil that was necessary to bring them into being. All the spectacular past of the settlement of Deerfield was



over and done with before the trek westward began. A witness to this as a fact is that in the whole length and breadth of the land west of the river there is no single monument or memorial stone such as are so numerous in Old Deerfield and its environs.

There never has been anything like a compact village in this western section. Each man built his house and barns more or less in the middle of his acres, or at least closely adjacent to them. These buildings were strung along the roads at quarter to half-mile intervals—two lines north and south, and scattered along the cross-roads. This arrangement indicates that no danger of attack by man was anticipated then.

The names of the dwellers in Deerfield, West, are, in the main, not the names of those who were east of the river in the early times. Quite evidently the settlers were not, for the most part, members of Old Deerfield families who went across the river to live, but people who came in from other places here and there. In looking through the pages of genealogy in Sheldon's "History," where are put down the names of those who had settled in Deerfield prior to the Revolutionary War, I found only two or three which were common to both sides of the river and from the same families. That is another reason why I am of the opinion that people did not settle across the river—much—until even after 1775. I think there never was a Sheldon, a Stebbins, a Childs, a Barnard, a Hitchcock—just to mention a few of the familiar Old Deerfield names—who made his home in the western part of the town. There were of the name of Allis three generations going back to the early 1800's in West Deerfield and descendants of Allises who lived somewhere east of the river. There is the name of Hawks, which goes rather far back in Old Deerfield history to one Eliezer, who, according to the genealogy, was born in 1655, probably in Windsor, Connecticut, but who came to Deerfield as one of the first permanent settlers. The line comes down through





the years to Nathaniel, to Zadock, whose oldest son, Hilkiah, chose to settle just as far west in the limits of Deerfield as he could go, on land which in some way had come into the possession of his father. Here Hilkiah built his house—a log house at first—and cleared away the forest. The location is just across the river from Hoosac, in the fairly wide and open valley through which Shingle Brook, before mentioned, goes down to the river.

The exact date of Hilkiah's removal across the river I do not know. We seem to have been, as a family, very negligent in keeping records; and it does not matter particularly anyway. He was married in 1783, and I suspect was living there at least as early as that. Over in that corner is a little cemetery, the oldest stone in which is for a daughter of his, bearing the date 1796. The farm passed on to Hilkiah's son Orlando, to Orlando's son James, and to James's son Herman. This is not intended to be a history of the Hawks' family: I should like to add, however, that there is no other dwelling place west of the river that has remained in one family line from the time of the original settlement to the present date.

Another son of Hilkiah, another Hilkiah and brother of Orlando, lived just over the hill east from the first Hawks' house. This is the farm which the Velorus Andrews' family carried on afterwards for many years.

The Hawkses apparently found West Deerfield a satisfactory place in which to live, for another descendant of Eliezer, Obed, also made his home there, but not as far to the west as the first Hilkiah. He built his house beside the Upper Road, near a cross-road leading down to the meadows. It always used to be called the Hawks' Hollow road. The house was a nice old square one, dignified and substantial, in general effect not unlike the old Hawks' homestead in Wapping. It was here that Frederick Hawks, who settled in Greenfield, was born. His son Frederick was until his death a few years



ago a very regular attendant at the meetings of the Memorial Association. Unfortunately the house burned—a pity, for it was of the sort that is an ornament to any community.

Other families which were living in West Deerfield well before 1800, but which had not migrated from the east side of the river were Dewolfs, Robbinses, Joneses, and Chapmans. There may have been others, but I hardly think so. Of all these the Joneses were the most numerous. They lived north and south in Wisdom and in the Nook, but not on the road toward Shelburne. To name just a few of them, not by any means a complete list, there was Amasa, Orson, Phelan, James, Caleb, John, George, Henry, Gurdon, Jenner, Israel, Dennis, Jabez, Jehiel who was apparently the first one, Alexis, Albert, Charles, Leverett, Goland, Moses,—besides very many Jones' women. A study of the genealogy seems to indicate that most of them did not go very far afield when they came to choose their life partners. Jones married Jones time after time, and there were large Jones families. One Jones had a particularly choice assortment of swear-words, in the use of which he was very proficient at the proper time and place; but in the presence of ladies his strongest expletive was "By Ginger!" He never forgot. Of them all George W. Jones was the most prominent in town and county affairs. He had a big farm near the place where the "Red Rocks" cross the river, and along with that carried on a large business as cattle buyer and butcher. He married a Jones who was probably some sort of cousin of his. After she died, he married her niece another Jones. He was selectman for six years, and at one time a member of the General Court. He amassed a very considerable fortune, built what was in its day accounted to be a fine house, and later lost practically everything. His house still stands, but it is fast going to ruin. Of all these Jones' families there is left now in West Deerfield just one single representative.





Other names of later date than those already mentioned are Hutchins, Briggs, Ball, Nims, Lanfair, Newcome, Randall, Wood, and Wise, but most of them have not lasted on till the present time. There is now no Robbins, Hutchins, Dewolf, Wood, Chapman,—the list could go on longer. Mostly Polish names have taken their places.

Not only the people, but in many cases even their houses have gone. Fires have taken their full toll of the old landmarks, some of them perhaps not by unhappy chance. The story used to be that any building in which a certain member of one of these old families had some financial interest had a way of going up in smoke. The coincidence was really very noticeable. Finally one night his own buildings burned, house and barns. The next morning a rooster from his flock was crowing away at a neighbors place, saying, according to the neighbor: "Charlie brought me over here." Only the name was not *Charlie*. That is a substitution for obvious reasons. There are very few of the old houses left, but in most cases the burned buildings have been replaced.

Mr. Sheldon tells at length the story of the incorporation as the town of Greenfield of the northern part of the Deerfield grant. I don't know where that old line would lie in terms of Greenfield of today, but it was somewhat north of the river, so that Cheapside was left to Deerfield. In 1887, however, most of the people in West Deerfield decided that they would be better off if they should be transferred to Greenfield. Therefore a petition was drawn up, circulated for signatures, and presented to the Legislature, to the effect that all of the township of Deerfield west and north of the Deerfield river be set off to Greenfield. I have been told that only two families in West Deerfield were opposed to that separation. The proponents argued that many advantages would come to them in the way of schools, roads, and so forth from connection with the more populous town. The opponents contended that the



separation would work a definite hardship to Deerfield as a town by taking from it a great piece of taxable property, thereby leaving it very small; and that the taxes levied by Greenfield would be higher than those in Deerfield, because the outlying districts would have to help pay for what were distinctly village improvements. The fight was a fairly hot one, and the General Court finally denied the petition. The decision was the occasion for a great ringing of bells and rejoicing on one side of the river and a considerable depression on the other. A few years later another petition, mostly unopposed, gave Greenfield Cheapside and named Sheldon Brook across the northern end of Deerfield, West, as the boundary line. Since that time everyone has seemed to be contented with things as they are.

Of course, with the settlement on the west side of the river, the matter of providing a way across became more urgent from year to year. There were fords, to be sure, three of them; but these crossings were never very dependable, because of the instability of the depth of water. There was also at one time a ferry at Stillwater. The road leading down to it is still traceable just east of the bridge, and the little cove where the landing was made is still there. A ferry was also existent somewhere north of Pine Hill. But many times high water and ice made both fords and ferries unusable. The way around by Cheapside Bridge was long and tedious in horse and buggy days, and the political center was on the east side of the river. Therefore it seemed to the people on the west side that a bridge was not an unreasonable demand on their part. I cannot find that Mr. Sheldon makes any mention whatever of this bridge affair. But sometime previous to 1850, I should think, it was the occasion of much discussion. The arguments *pro* from the west side and *con* from the east side became more and more emphatic in statement. It is easy to imagine what the proponents put forward as reasons why a bridge should be built, but not so easy to see why there should





have been any considerable objection, beyond the cost. So far as I can make out however, that was never offered as a particular reason against the project. Because of the changing bed of the river back and forth across the meadows, and the fact that therefore there was no possibility of solid foundation for abutments and piers anywhere else, Stillwater seemed to be the only feasible location. No one questioned that. Before this time a thriving settlement had sprung up in Conway. The only way for its people to get to the county seat in Greenfield was around through Old Deerfield and Cheapside Bridge. The main objection put forth by the east siders appears to have been that the construction of the bridge would divert much travel from Old Deerfield Street and some business. The consideration of the greatest good to the greatest number had no bearing on the case. Tempers flared on both sides of the river, and harsh words were quite in order. In town meeting one of the objectors in the course of his speech asked: "What will become of Old Deerfield?" He probably did not expect an answer, but one came straightway from a man of blunt language from the west side. He said, "Put a fence across both ends of it and turn it into a hog pasture. It's stocked already." Finally the town voted to build the bridge. The people in West Deerfield had a big celebration, the out-standing feature of which was a huge bonfire, so placed that the whole splendor of it was plainly visible to everyone in Old Deerfield.

The bridge that was built was an old-style covered one, like so many scattered about in New England. It was carried away by a big freshet in October of 1869. It was replaced in 1871 by the one now spanning the river at Stillwater, the first suspension bridge in the state, high enough above the river so that even the tremendous high waters of 1936 and '38 could not touch it. It was constructed by Robling, the man who some years later engineered the construction of the great Brooklyn suspension bridge. If you want to see one of the really



beautiful sights in this immediate vicinity, you should make it a point to be on Stillwater Bridge some evening as the full moon is climbing the eastern sky. The whole picture, with the moonlight reflected across the still water and the quietness and general loveliness of the whole setting, is something not easily forgotten.

As an almost inevitable result of settlement, special names came into use to designate various parts of the tract across the river, and they still persist. "Stillwater" includes both sides of the river near the bridge. The "Nook" is just what the name says, some acres of land on the Lower Road just around the end of the hill east from Stillwater. If the lake were there now, as geologists tell us it used to be, this place would probably be called a *cove*. Once, in a year now long past, a good deal of excitement prevailed in the Nook over the alleged discovery of two or three mineral springs of medicinal value along the foot of the bank there. The discoverer was one of the dwellers in the Nook, and for a while he enjoyed a good deal of publicity. But someone happened along very early one Sunday morning and caught him in the act of supplying those springs with their mineral properties. So that was the end of that bubble.

The country along beyond the Nook northward was frequently spoken of as "Under the Hill" by the older inhabitants. I do not think that this name is much used now and it seems never to have been very definite in its application. These names are easily explained, but that is not true of the others.

Probably "Wisdom" is the most outstanding designation, because of its oddity and the fact that it includes all the Upper Road from Stillwater to the north town line. I have no idea as to the *how* or *why* of its origin. Of course there is the story about the two brothers Wise who settled in this section, from whose name "Wisdom" was derived. But unfortunately for that tale, there was only one Wise in fact, according to the





genealogy he was born in Winchester, New Hampshire, in 1800, and did not settle in West Deerfield until after 1822, probably, as that was the date of his marriage. Only one of his sons, Lucius, stayed on, and all Lucius' family removed from the town. Besides that, the answers to my questioning indicate that originally only the part of that area from the church southward was called "Wisdom," while that to the north was called "Little Hope," and it was north of the church that this one Wise had his home. Not until later were the names "North Wisdom" and "South Wisdom" used. "Little Hope," too, is now beyond explanation, I am afraid, and is no longer in common use.

The story is that there used to be a sort of social cleavage in Wisdom. The "aristocrats" lived north of the church, while those south of it were a little outside the pale. They did not belong to the "best families." But there was always association, even if along with it at times a little condescension.

Mr. Sheldon makes "Wisdom" include all the land west to the river, but in fact the name was never used by those living there to designate the region along the road to Shelburne. That seems never to have had any sectional name. A good many years ago a man by the name of Robbins lived there just across the border line in Shelburne. He had moved down from Heath. A while afterwards one of his old neighbors met him and asked: "How do you like it down there?" "Oh," said Mr. Robbins, "it's perpetual summer there." I tell the story here as evidence that the climate that prevails in the hills west of the river is no less pleasing than that of the lowlands on the east side. Maybe it is more so, for very many times when the valley lands are shrouded in a bank of fog the western hills are in the clear sunshine. Houses used to be scattered along this road. The Andrews farm, mentioned before was extensive. But the house burned and was not replaced, so the good fields became pasture land and are fast growing up to



brush. The names "Bruce Place," "Stickney Place," "Blakesley Hollow" testify that there were other dwellings, but of them only the cellar holes remain.

Sometimes now-a-days the highway across to South Shelburne is spoken of as the "Old World Road," but the older inhabitants never called it that. The real Old World Road turns off into the hills some rods north. It does not cross into Shelburne at all but serves just as a way of entrance into the Old World country. I don't know why it was so called, but the name is inviting. The territory so designated was in the old days, and so properly shall be now, the valley and the slopes on both sides between the first and second ranges of hills along the road as far north as Arthur's Seat, a large acreage. Down through it runs the old "Seven Mile Line," the western line of the seven square miles grant—Mr. Sheldon says it can be traced from Colrain to Whately. No houses are in the Old World now, but five or six cellar holes bear silent witness that once people lived there. In the southern part it is fairly wooded, but in the northern section around Arthur's Seat great sweeps of beautiful pasture land open up. The whole region has a fascination all its own.

In the years gone by West Deerfield people were always very social-minded. They liked to visit in the good old way of going to spend the afternoon and staying to supper, even without a previous invitation. They all did it, and all enjoyed it, those visited as well as those visiting. All the latch-strings were always out, and there was spontaneous as well as planned hospitality. A very popular sort of gathering was the "surprise party." In West Deerfield it was an expression of the utmost good will; and the size of the parties was in direct proportion to the popularity of the victim—though he never thought of himself in that light. They were a proof of neighborliness and afforded a lot of good fun.

In addition, however, there were regular social gatherings. For many years a society known as the "Social





Union" carried on, with sociability as its prime objective. I think it must have originated in the late '60's, and it continued for many years. The meetings were held regularly at the homes of the various members, and everybody who was physically able attended, whether the weather was fair or foul. Those were the days when people were not loath to open their houses to parties of this sort. The "Social Union" had a secondary purpose, too. Community houses are quite the thing now. But before the establishment of social centers was for the most part anything but a vague idea, these people of Wisdom were planning just that thing. The "Social Union," by means of a small tax on each one attending the meetings, set out to raise money to build a community house. To be sure they never did build it, for before their fund reached a sufficient amount, the Social Union ceased to be. The reason of its dissolution was much the same as that for the giving up of the church services. Many of the old families died out or moved away, and the new ones which took their places had no common interests with those who remained. So it could not be otherwise. The considerable sum they had raised through the years was finally utilized to make over the old church so that it could be used also as a social center.

The story of the church in West Deerfield is not a particularly happy one. Mr. Sheldon tells of its beginning. In 1787 there was organized "The Baptist Church of Shelburne and Deerfield," the Deerfield indicated being the section west of the river. In 1809 this Wisdom part of the society agreed to build a meeting-house, which was finished in 1810. After a while the Shelburne people withdrew from the Society, and there followed a reorganization under the title of "The First Baptist Society in Deerfield." Apparently peace and harmony did not prevail as time passed, for in 1823 or thereabout a part of the congregation seceded, and formed a second society. In 1834 the first society by a majority of one



voted to dissolve; but a council, meeting that same year, decreed that this could not be done by a single vote. Then the two societies reunited, and there is no further record of any particular internal dissensions.

There were ministers Martin, Dalrymple, Hale, Bills, Frary, and Pease, as named by Mr. Sheldon, but none of them seems to have stayed long enough really to know his congregation. In the late '60's and through the '70's there was settled in Wisdom an English physician, Doctor Walmsley. He and his two-wheeled gig and his faithful horse Dolly came to be widely known in the surrounding towns. Whether he was also an ordained minister I do not know; but for a good many years he was the regular preacher for the Wisdom church. It was a case where attention to physical and spiritual welfare went hand in hand. Later Dr. Francis Robbins used to come in the summer from his home in Greenfield to conduct afternoon meetings there until his health no longer permitted. Some other Greenfield ministers also helped. Mr. Anderson, known throughout the county, gave his services for a fairly long period; and some of the ministers of the Orthodox Church in Old Deerfield accepted as part of their duties the supplying of that pulpit. It was a losing struggle, however. In these later years the infiltration of Polish people into Wisdom, with their church interests in South Deerfield or Greenfield, has made it impossible for the Society to carry on, so that now the church is closed. But it did its part valiantly in its day. Until a very few years ago, a group of its faithful women still kept up the meetings of this Ladies' Aid Society.

In the time before the centralization and consolidation of schools there was a North Wisdom and a South Wisdom school house. The north one still stands where it was originally placed, out a little on the old Albany Road before it starts up the hill—now-a-days more or less “a ragged beggar sunning.” The first location of the South School was at the top of the hill where the road





starts across to Shelburne. I suppose it was set here because at the time of its building there were families along that road, as well as those who were living in the Old World, so that the position of the school house was fairly central. Years later it was moved to the foot of the hill, and was in use there till it burned. Then a new house, said at the time to be a model modern type for a district school, was built in the Nook, as apparently the center of population had shifted again. It had been in use only a few years when the transportation of the children to the graded schools of Deerfield and South Deerfield began. Of course in West Deerfield as in all other country schools in the earlier half of the nineteenth century, the teachers had to go through the ordeal of "boarding around," and sometimes their experiences were anything but pleasant. It all depended on the family.

Within the bounds of Deerfield, West, are three cemeteries—North Wisdom, on the Albany Road; South Wisdom, by the church; and the Hawks' cemetery, close to the Shelburne line.\* Here, as the names and dates attest, the "forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

"The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,  
The swallow, twittering from his straw-built shed,  
The cock's shrill clarion, and the echoing horn,  
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,  
Nor busy housewife ply her evening care;  
No children run to lisp their sire's return.  
Or climb his knee the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,  
Their furrow oft the stubborn glibe hath broke;  
How jocund did they drive their team afield!  
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!"

\*There are also graves, including a Blakely, in a pasture northerly of the former West Deerfield railroad station. Editor.



Many times people travel far and wide in search of beauty, when there is a whole treasure of it close at hand. They assume that as a matter of course whatever is near is entirely commonplace, unless there is some distinctly spectacular element involved. "Distance lends enchantment to the view." Thus it is with Deerfield, west of the river. To its utmost limit as the crow flies it is probably not more than three and a half miles from Old Deerfield. By road and automobile it is an easy fifteen minute ride. It is country beautiful in all sorts of variations. There is highland and lowland, the charm of running water, sylvan glades and great open spaces, the beauty of the far view, and that of some little thing within reach of your hand. If it's color that you want, the changing seasons offer it there in full measure, from the red maples of spring to the last oak leaf of the autumn and the white and greens and grays of winter. You might go further and fare worse.

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## A WOMAN'S EXPERIENCE IN THE MINISTRY

BY REVEREND MARGARET B. BARNARD

The motives that lead women to enter the ministry are probably much the same as those which influence men—eagerness to develop the spiritual life, a desire to serve humanity, and in many cases it may be that the studious side of a minister's life would have its strong appeal. In my own case the desire came gradually.

Born in Maine and educated in a French school in New Orleans, I taught French ten years in two very fine private schools in Boston, and I had reasonable success in preparing students for college and the Institute of Technology. Teaching was a great delight to me and I was very fond of my pupils, and I consider this experience an excellent preparation for my work in the ministry.





Among the influences leading me towards the ministry was the example of several very fine women ministers, real pioneers in their way: Mary Safford, Ida Hultin, Anna Garlin Spencer, Eleanor Gordon, Caroline Bartlett Crane. Their work was a great inspiration to me and I followed the account of it very eagerly long before any decision on my part was made or even contemplated. Then a class in Old and New Testament criticism interested me very much in the modern study of the Bible and was another factor.

The difficulties however of securing an education were great at that time. Meadville was the only Unitarian theological school which admitted women, and, as the distance was great, and I could not leave my elderly parents, it was out of the question to consider it. Harvard would admit women for one course but they had to matriculate at Radcliffe and pay more for the one course than the students would for the entire course. I declined to do it. Tufts College would admit me but, as I had to earn my living while studying, the arrangement of hours was impossible. Finally I took one course in New Testament work at the Boston University School of Theology where I received much courtesy. In despair, I went to the dean of the Harvard Theological School and asked him if he could provide me with a tutor. In a few days he informed me that Mr. Willard Reed would come to my home once a week. It seems that when the dean asked Mr. Reed, he said to him, "How would you like to go to Chelsea and start a little divinity school?" and so the classes were always called the Chelsea Divinity School by Mr. Reed and Mr. Reccord. The divinity school certainly required very high standards of its pupil and she, being fearful of falling behind the record of the men, worked many hours, both night and day. Later on when Mr. Reccord became the minister at Chelsea, he was told by Mr. Reed that if he needed any help in social service work, he had better turn to me because



Reed had never dared to tell me how much more I had read than he had.

My first sermon was preached in West Somerville, supplying the pulpit for a ministerial friend. Just before the sermon, a note was handed to me saying that the church would be closed for the summer after this service. I was grateful that it had not come immediately after the sermon, for then I should have been sure that I was responsible for the closing edict.

One of our former ministers who was in charge of a Salem church was rash enough to ask me to preach for him, and I did so with fear and trembling. The church is of a fine old Gothic type and the pulpit was very high. As Mr. T. was very tall, he did not need any assistance in facing his audience, but there happened to be two heavy blocks of wood in the pulpit for the use of ministers under six feet, and when I took my part in the service he put down these blocks and when he took part, he raised them. It was rather a ridiculous performance of which the congregation was entirely ignorant, and if I hadn't been too nervous to see anything funny in it, I should have been convulsed. But I lived through it.

Another time at Marblehead, again I found one of these old-fashioned pulpits. The congregation did not see me until I arose for the opening part of the service. In the audience, I learned afterwards, was a lady who was greatly opposed to women in the ministry. She had always declared she would not listen to one. But I was there, and after some struggle, she discovered that her innate politeness would not allow her to leave. I preached several times after that and she was always in attendance at the services!

In 1897, I was received into the fellowship of the Unitarian Ministry and was ordained at my home church in Chelsea. The service was a very beautiful and impressive one, the young women of the church acting as ushers and beautiful flowers being received





from the Chelsea Woman's Club of which I had just been elected president. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Anna Garlin Spencer, of Providence, and the minister who gave me the right hand of fellowship spoke very earnestly, concluding with, "I give you my hand and my heart goes with it." Again I did not see anything funny, but my friends tormented me afterwards about receiving an offer of marriage in public.

A few days after my ordination, I was asked to go to Warwick, Massachusetts, for a Sunday service. I knew nothing about the place except that it was nine miles from the railroad. So leaving the train at Orange, I found a stage for Warwick. In it were two other ladies, one rather large and another very slender and elderly. They discovered immediately that they had many friends in common and when about half way to Warwick the elderly lady left the stage, the other lady turned to me cheerfully and said, "Well, perhaps we have some friends in common."

I hesitated, then said, "That is a little doubtful as I am a stranger here."

"Are you going to Warwick?" she asked.

I said, "Yes."

"Have you friends there?"

"No."

"Are you going to stay long?"

"Probably not."

"Where are you going to stay?"

"Really, I don't know."

She soon gave me up as a very unsatisfactory source of information, and turned her attention to the driver. After many inquiries about the town and the people, she said, "Is the church on the hill open?"

"Yes."

"Who is going to preach there tomorrow?"

"Wa-al, I don't know unless it be this lady next ye."

Tableau and great astonishment! It was the first hint I had that the driver knew me. The acquaintance



with the lady, thus begun, ripened into a very pleasant friendship, and during my stay of two months in Warwick, her home was a very delightful resting place for me.

Warwick was an interesting town and the people were very cordial and friendly. There had been some trouble in the church before I went there, so in making parish calls I had to avoid all personalities. My general subject of conversation was the beauties of Warwick and I wondered many times if the people compared notes and thought me utterly lacking in ideas. The congregation grew steadily while I was there, and when my two months were ended, the committee would have been very glad to have me remain for the winter, but I could not think of taking my father and mother and aunt to so small a town, and the presidency of the Woman's Club and other ties kept me in Chelsea for another year. But I went back the next summer and I would have gone for the third time if I had not received a call to the church in Chelsea. All I need say here is that Warwick was a very lovely introduction to the people and scenery of Franklin County and I recall the experience with a great deal of pleasure.

The Chelsea pastorate was a very interesting one and the Boston and local ministers all joined in doing all they could to help me. I became a member of the Boston Association of Ministers—an unexpected and utterly unsought for honor on my part—and was the only woman ever to become a member. But the ministers certainly gave me a most friendly welcome and it was one of the great privileges of my life.

During my pastorate, I gave particular attention to the young people and their needs. A Boys' Club studied Constitutional Government in practical ways, organizing as city officials, and studying real problems. The boys were keenly interested and the success was great. An older group, among other things, gave a fine art exhibit. The difficulties of my work in Chelsea





were increased by severe illness in my family and at the close of the second year I realized that it would be impossible for me to carry on the church and the home. So my resignation was offered and accepted.

In January of the next year, I had an opportunity to preach in Rowe, Massachusetts. To reach it I had to start Saturday morning from Boston and spend five hours in a slow local train. About 4 o'clock, I reached Zoar, the railroad station for Rowe, and there waited an hour for the stage. The four-mile ride was all uphill, behind a slow horse, and it was dark when we arrived at Mrs. Julia Browning's hospitable home. She welcomed me most cordially, and she and her son did much for my comfort. The thermometer was well below zero, and my room on the ground floor had no fire, but it was heated a little from the next room.

The following morning the services were held in the town hall with a small but rather interesting congregation awaiting me. Something about the place appealed to me very strongly. The town was beautiful in its winter dress and in spite of the cold, I enjoyed every moment. Nevertheless I did not feel that I ought to accept the invitation that was extended to me to go there because of my parents. After I returned home, the people in Rowe wrote quite frequently urging me to return. I had many struggles over the problem. Personally I was strongly attracted to the people and the work, but had I any right to take my parents, both of whom were over eighty, to a small town far away from all their friends and relatives? Many hours were spent trying to solve the problem and at last one of my ministerial friends suggested that I ask the parish to take me for six months. "Then," as he said, "you will know whether you want to stay and how it will affect your parents." The parish accepted the proposal and in April, 1902, I started for Rowe with bag and baggage, and my cat. When I arrived at Zoar, the conductor said to me in a very pleasant voice, "Have you all the



bundles?" and I wondered whether it was sarcasm or kindly interest. The neighbors and parishioners welcomed me most kindly and the congregation was much larger than I had been lead to anticipate. I had heard that the parish had about decided to use whatever small funds they had as long as they lasted and then close the church. But after the first summer I heard nothing more of any funerals. Bills were paid and the interest only of funds was allowed to be used. Among my serious problems, however, was that of creating new courage, not only in the church but in the community. A former minister had taken a very pessimistic view of rural life and had written very scathing denunciations of the churches, the people, and the activities. So my first duty was to create not only in Rowe, but in the surrounding county, a new ideal of rural life. This became the permanent motive of all preaching and lecturing during the fourteen years of my ministry there.

All matters concerning rural life interested me greatly. I came in contact with the Massachusetts State College Agricultural Department and I was active in the Grange and became the secretary of the committee on country churches of the Massachusetts Federation of Churches. I also came in contact with workers in various fields that touched rural life, and the State College frequently sent students and others to Rowe to consult with me.

But to return to the church, my experience as a teacher and a church school worker had made me recognize the great importance of education for the children of the community. My predecessor had done nothing in that line. As I looked around at first, I saw only four children, but I felt that four children deserved an education as much as four hundred, so I started a school at once, telling the children stories of the Bible and interesting them in many ways. One little girl became so absorbed in the story of the manna





being dropped upon the Israelites in the wilderness that she asked her father if he could not procure her some. The women were organized into an Alliance group and became very much interested in the work, not only in Rowe, but elsewhere.

As I studied the region and its possibilities, I felt that a church situated as ours was should be helpful to the communities around it. I asked my parish committee if it would not be well to have a few meetings during the summer in outlying school houses or other places. They entered heartily into the idea and arranged services for me in Heath, in Zoar, in Whitingham, Vermont, and in other places. These services were kept up for most of the years I was there and for two or three years I held regular monthly services at Monroe Bridge, a small manufacturing town about four miles from Rowe but separated by a hill which descended one thousand feet in one mile. My trips there were frequently very difficult and even perilous and had it not been for the skill of my driver, we should have had many accidents. One day as we started down the hill we found an icy coating under the snow. The horses were smooth shod and we slid most of the distance. As we approached the village, there was a sharp turn with only a weak railing to protect us from dropping to the railroad several feet below and from there into the river. We accomplished the feat and made the turn safely, but on our return we walked up the hill for exercise.

A rural conference was held in 1910 under the auspices of the various organizations in the village and while it was not so largely attended as we had hoped, it attracted much attention and brought new ideas for rural activity. The Springfield Republican thought it important enough to print the speeches in full and each evening called me by telephone for further information. An annual report of the church was also published in full in the same paper.



As the earlier years of my ministry passed, it became increasingly evident that there was great need of a church building. The old church on the hill, which dated from 1845, was in a very dilapidated condition and it was impossible to heat it in the winter. So for the first five years of my ministry, we held services in the town hall and another building near at hand. We had many meetings and many discussions over the problem of what could be done—whether the old church could be removed to another location or a new one built. While the discussion was going on and because of lack of funds there seemed no likelihood of anything being done, I received a letter one day from Mrs. Mary P. Wells Smith, of Greenfield, and upon opening it a check for four thousand dollars fell out. Looking at it, I saw that it was a gift from Preserved Smith's youngest and only living grandson, suggesting that we make the church a memorial for his grandfather. Later another thousand was added to the gift and we began to consider ways and means. As there is very little level land in Rowe, the question of location was quite important, but on the eleventh of May, 1907, ground was broken for a new stone church. On July 7th the corner stone was laid with appropriate ceremonies. This corner stone caused us wild excitement for in spite of promises, it did not arrive at Zoar until the last train Saturday afternoon, and the stone had to be transported four miles up the hill to Rowe. But it arrived. Taking part in the dedication was Mrs. Constance Smith Homer, great-granddaughter of Preserved Smith, and the corner stone itself was laid by a great-great-grandson, Joseph Warren Homer, Jr. Mrs. Smith also gave a paper and the great-granddaughter of Hosea Ballou took part in the services. The building was dedicated, free from debt and with three hundred dollars remaining in the bank, on November 14, 1907, with a large number of prominent ministers and guests present from out of town. The windows were memorials





to former families of Rowe, and many pews were also memorials. Dr. Sunderland, of Hartford, said of the building, "This is Rowe's 'Westminster Abbey.'"

Among the many duties that fell to the minister of the church were funerals of former Universalist people and other liberals within a radius of about fifteen miles. In all kinds of weather and with terrible roads, we had to travel these long distances by sleigh and buggy.

After fourteen years in Rowe, it seemed to me that my work was ending. Everything was serene, there was no debt, the parish had a fine new building, and the people were united,—apparently there was little more than I could really do unless the town itself could become economically stronger. It was a great sorrow to me even to consider leaving, for I loved the people and the country region and I had every reason to believe that the people reciprocated. But I was not growing younger and it seemed that if there was to be a change, it should come when all was moving along well.

Just at this critical moment there came a call to the church at Bernardston, Massachusetts. This was the third call that I had received from that church, and after many anxious days and sleepless nights I told the people of my offer and its probable acceptance. Everyone was very much upset and for weeks I was subjected to a barrage of entreaty to remain. But I felt that the move was a wise one for the church and me, and I took charge of the society in Bernardston in September, 1916. In the invitation to the church at Bernardston, Dr. Pierce, chairman of the committee, had used the expression, "You have put Rowe on the map. Now we want you to put Bernardston there." The salary was still small, but I was nearer the railroad and more conveniently located for more activities.

My pastorate at Bernardston covered six years—very hard ones because of the World War and all the consequent work for the Red Cross, of which I was



chairman for the town, and active in many other causes of the time. Then my household cares were made more difficult by the fact that a valued housekeeper was taken ill and died soon after I went there. With a very large house on my hands and two young girls to care for, I found it also very difficult to secure any competent help, so much time and energy had to be given to the household.

Among the problems facing the society was that of the church school. This had been allowed to run down and it took two years of very hard work to bring it up to a position where it was worthy of the church, and to maintain it at a high degree of efficiency for the years I was there. There was also some sickness on my part, and one winter my physicians sent me to California for a complete change. However, they wouldn't dare to trust me without a church, so I had charge of the Redlands Church during the five months I was away. Following the war, we had a terrible epidemic of influenza which brought great anguish and suffering to many families, and which was not only very wearing to the minister but also a great strain on her time and strength.

But there was one great privilege there. Bernardston was fortunate in having a will to cooperate among her three churches. This had been brought about largely through the long pastorate and fine spirit of Rev. Eugene Frary, Pastor of the Federated Church. Three times a year our churches met for union services, and Mr. Frary and I were constantly in conference over local affairs.

In the summer of 1922, I received a letter from the chairman of the Southern Committee of the Alliance of Unitarian Women asking me to consider a call to the work in North Carolina. I had long been a member of this committee and very much interested in the work. But it was the death of a dear friend who had spent many years there that brought the matter to a crisis for me. As much as I disliked to leave Bernardston,





and Massachusetts, I felt that I had no ties that bound me, and it might be my duty to take up this very difficult work. So I went to North Carolina in September, 1922, and remained there in very active work until the summer of 1927.

During that time I had charge of three churches at distances from twelve to twenty miles away, over roads that were often almost impassible from mud to sand. I supervised the school, and cared for the household, while attending to all business and correspondence. One year we held a tonsil clinic in our cottage. Through the generosity of friends, we were able to have a specialist, a trained nurse, our regular physician and two practical nurses to assist us. Eleven children had their tonsils removed, and all the operations were very successful. A new and much larger school house was built, our bungalow enlarged, and the teaching force greatly increased, one addition being a business course. Beside these activities, much was done to promote a cleaner social life. A Girl Scout troop was carried on, and efforts to promote better health and improved living conditions were made.

When I started North in 1927, I was far from well, and on reaching Greenfield was taken to the hospital where I remained for six months suffering from typhoid fever followed by a relapse. And thus ended my active work as a minister.

In conclusion let me say that although there are fewer women ministers today in active service than there were when I began my ministry, I still believe there is a place and a great opportunity for women to help the world in this way. It is unfortunate that a certain prejudice prevents women from advancing to the larger churches, for no matter how successful they may be, they rarely receive a call to the churches that would pay a really living salary. My own personal experience was so happy a one that I would like to see other women doing a similar work, and I hope that the



time will come when the prejudices of race, color, and sex will be forgotten and ability to do the work will be the real standard of service.

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## THE "LIVERY OFFICE"

BY FRANCIS NIMS THOMPSON

Strange as it may seem to the present generation, people "drove" before these days of the automobile. Men of leisure used to come with their families to the old Mansion House to take the "hundred beautiful drives" from Greenfield, elm-shaded shire town of our County of Franklin. Seated in Concord buggy, phaeton or carryall, they drove horse or pair over our country roads, following rivers that meander through the valleys and brooks that hasten down the hills of western Massachusetts.

In those less hurried days—when the driver did not say to his wife "that's a nice little village ahead" and be answered "Yes, that was a pretty place"—there were driving horses and livery stables; and appurtenant to these were "livery offices," social centres of a sort: in fact of many sorts; sorts as widely diverse as the several proprietors and their circles of friends.

When the livery business was thriving there were many stables. One, in Greenfield, easterly of the Main street schoolyard, was connected with the Elm House: I associate with it Charles P. Aldrich and Henry Couillard. Squires and Hager were earlier proprietors. The American House stable was in the rear of the hotel which was later given the family name of the illustrious general, Charles Devens,—once a Greenfield lawyer,—whose statue stands near the state house. Haley's stable was behind his house and barber shop on School street. As a boy I patronized that shop, read the notice about clipping horses which was hung beside the mirror, and wondered how Haley classified that part of his activi-





ties. Ed Fowler and Frank Gerrett ran the Franklin House stable on Clay Hill.

"Sam" Payne had a large stable, reached from Federal street, in the rear of the Mansion House; and Edward Strecker had another,—formerly conducted by Fred Graves and later by Dr. Mark L. Miner,—a veterinary surgeon,—on the south side of Main street. Strecker's stable was approached through an arch beneath the wooden part of his block of stores. East of that block was the Miller Block, and between this and "Nims' Livery Office" was the driveway to Nims' Stable, an assemblage of big barns occupied by some sixty horses. The only horses now to be seen at the location of these two stables are those which cavort across the "movie" screen of the Garden Theatre. But none of these are comparable with my uncle's "Old Herod;" or with Frank Pond's driving horse, which I was sometimes allowed to exercise to keep him within bounds.

Could there really have been seven stables? Why, of course; probably more: Yes, Jackson had one up on the east side of Federal street. There was a slight physical resemblance between Charles B. Jackson and Lucius Nims, in that both were large men with good complexions and each wore a sandy moustache. Some small farmer stopped my uncle, Mr. Nims, and asked if he might borrow a mowing machine. Nims had none, but his Yankee reply was "Do you know where it is?"—to which the farmer answered "Yes, right under the shed." "All right, you may take it" Uncle Lucius said. Some time later Mr. Jackson complained that his mowing machine had been gone for a month; someone had come right into his shed and taken it away without saying a word!

To run a stable successfully—to survive as a livery man—one had to know not only horseflesh, an accomplishment beyond the ability of most men, but he needed to know, and know well, human nature. Proprietors of stables achieved differing degrees of perfec-



tion in these arts and in a third requirement, the shrewd purchase of hay and more particularly of grain, a staple more speculative than stocks and bonds. Lucius Nims and Arthur D. Potter were masters of that science.

During the winter Main street was a convenient race-track upon which the horsemen of Greenfield might demonstrate the comparative speed of their favorites, hitched to a single sleigh,—rigid from nose of horse to tip of runner; and almost any fine day in summer Aldrich and Couillard, Hager and "the old judge," Charles Hoyt and Anson Browning, the clothing dealer, might be seen on their sulkeys, driving back and forth on the Colrain road.

It is said that Couillard once made a blind swap with another jockey and brought a saw-horse as his part of the trade, but confessed himself beaten at his own game when he saw the beast which the other fellow was leading.

One of the horse-lovers was exercising his trotting mare on West Main street when he saw "Hen" Couillard walking west. "Want to ride?" "Depends on where you're going." "Going anywhere you want to go." "Thought I'd go down to Euclid Owen's."—That was between Main street and the "Uncle Jimmy Newton" covered bridge across Green river.

"Wait a minute!" said Couillard, as he got out and started down the driveway leading to Owen's barn. He opened the door and went in. Soon he came out, leading an old horse—saddle-backed but well fed. As he came opposite the house-door, it flew open and Owen appeared, in his shirt-sleeves and with his white hair standing on end, as it usually did. "Here, Couillard, where you goin' with that hoss?" "I'm aleadin' of it off" said Henry. "Well, I bought that hoss at the auction a month ago," said Owen. "I know you did," acknowledged Couillard, "but I got a claim-note on this horse: just thought I'd let you fat him up a little."

Whether accurate or not, that is a typical story of the





Yankee horse-trader. We must return to "Nims' livery office," as it was called. Everyone, who was anybody, did return to it. There was no choicer fraternity in this region than those who dropped in from time to time to talk with the proprietor: doctors, lawyers and ministers, and others not less well known and respected.

Many professional men in those days were decidedly "horsey." Reverend Henry Hyde knew well the ways of those beasts. When he drove to a ministerial gathering at a country town with a "pulling" horse, he backed the horse into the horse-shed and tied it to the post. It is said that several other ministers, who did not have horses with the same bad habit but who knew the visiting minister to be a superior horseman, hitched their steady old nags in similar fashion. Reverend Charles Merriam was a frequent visitor at the livery office, and Reverend G. Glenn Atkins\* and my uncle particularly enjoyed each other's company, despite the disparity in age.

Dr. Adams Calhoun Deane—how exactly such a name dates a man!—was in and out of the office for many years. I remember going to his barn (on the lot west of the present post-office) to see two litters of pug dogs—curious little animals with tightly curled tails and much-corrugated muzzles. Uncle Lucius, not instantly recalling the breed's name, spoke of it as "the dog with faces at both ends."

Naturally, when Dr. Deane needed a new horse it was L. Nims who selected the animal; but once, when the doctor was away from home, he had an opportunity to pick up an extraordinary horse at a bargain. He was much pleased with the horse, and considerably with himself: he wanted Lucius to see that horse, and was disappointed that when he drove up to the office the boss was not about. However, he hitched his treasure, and went about his business—or perhaps he joined "Bak" Noyes, "Rashe" Sanderson and Charlie Lowell

\*Read his appreciative comment in P. V. M. A., vol. IX, page 200 (1941 Annual).



about the stove in the drug store around the corner on Bank Row.

Meanwhile the horseman returned, noticed the new horse in the old buggy, and also noticed that the animal's weight was on his off fore foot, while the near foot rested daintily on its tip. When Nims picked up that foot and examined it his suspicion that the horse was lame was confirmed. As he felt he should tell its owner, and as the doctor was not in sight, Uncle Lucius stepped into the office, selected a crook-necked cane and hung it on the shaft next the lame foot. Then he quietly and completely disappeared. Of course the doctor recognized the truth and force of the silent comment, when he returned to the horse that he loved—and you know human nature! But the two men did not meet during the next few days, and by that time the temperature had abated.

Judge David Aiken was one of those who used to drop into Nims' office to smoke a cigar with my uncle. Their tastes in cigars, or their appropriations for tobacco, differed; and Uncle Lucius preferred furnishing the cigars to smoking one of the judge's. Once, when the judge drew first, his host politely said "Good cigar; where'd you get it?" "Kellogg's: one cent," tersely said the judge. Kellogg's grocery was between Judge Aiken's home and office. When Judge Aiken and L. Nims discussed men and affairs shrewd comments were exchanged.

The ruling passion of "the old judge," as David Aiken was called, was the race horse. He died in 1895 at the age of ninety, having made few concessions to Time. I well recall meeting his son, the chief justice, at Arms' corner (near their law office) and inquiring for his father, whom I had heard was ill. Judge John started to say, with a rather long face, "Well, Father's pretty. . ."—when down Main street came the old judge in his buffalo overcoat, seated behind his trotter; and we both grinned.





"John Aiken" was a familiar name in our family and as a little boy I used to carry flowers from his mother to mine, both living on west Main street. He and my uncle used to take many drives together to the towns about, often for a substantial meal at some country inn, or to spend an evening in Deerfield with "Billy" Williams, another of the frequenters of Nims' social centre.

Mr. Williams had his preferences, and more especially his dislikes, among his acquaintances; and his speech was quick and to the point. While sitting in the office one day he saw a doctor's buggy go down the driveway to the barn. "There's Dr. Stetson, said he; 'He's been down to see Old G.: I'm going to find out how he is.'" Off he pattered to the rear door. On his return my uncle asked "Well, how's G.?" "Nothing encouraging; nothing encouraging," said "Billy"—He's getting better."

I think that his tartness was but a condiment with which he seasoned life. The chestnut burr has a sweet heart; and when I was a boy Mr. Williams gave me a wonderful top which, when properly poked as it spun, performed the miracle of changing its color.

One day Mr. Williams showed unmistakable signs of a cold, and my uncle sympathized with him. Billy said "I don't mind the cold so much as I do the way I got it—from that damned toad." The fact was that he, an insurance agent, had a desk in the same room in "Sanborn's Block" with a newspaper man who, being constitutionally chilly, had a smelly little oil stove by his desk, and the wick of that stove and the sash of Billy's window had been going up in unison but not in harmony.

An old local tale is of a heated discussion between Billy and Captain Ephriam—as to whether it would be the height of folly or the only reasonable course for their sister, Miss Eliza, to keep a cow if she survived them; at the close of which argument each took his candle and retired with offended dignity to his own chamber.

Mr. Williams was a devout Episcopalian, and I think



that his cousin, who did not attend that church, will vouch for this dialogue. "Good morning, Cousin William." "How do you do, Belle, where are you going?" "I'm starting for church, William." "I wish to God you were; I'm afraid you're only going to meeting." Another story, less well authenticated, relates his profanity when interrupted in his prayers.

On one of the frequent visits to Old Deerfield my uncle was much entertained by a brief tilt between Billy and John, or Judge Aiken. It was all one: John or Judge. John was always "as dignified as a judge" and the chief justice never ceased to be our very good friend, John Aiken. The little encounter was this: John, feeling very mischevous, said soberly, but sure that he was poking a hornets' nest, "Good evening, Mr. Williams; and how is your friend F. . . . . today?" Quick as a flash came the retort: "Oh, very nicely, thank you; very nicely; and how is Mr. G.?"—naming a connection of John's for whom he knew the judge felt equal contempt.

Inquiries along those lines ended at that point; but when the two friends got in the buggy to return to Greenfield, one said "You didn't get far with your inquiries about Billy's friends" and the other replied "I didn't see anything so very funny about that;" and Lucius chuckled. An another such visit the joke was played too quickly, and the tables were turned. The two pals drove into the Williams yard one evening and hitched the horse to the corner of the shed—about where the Deerfield Academy business office now is. Billy's chamber window flew up and his voice called sharply "Who's there?" "Oh, Charlie H. . . ." replied Lucius, naming a man he knew to be one of Mr. Williams' favorite antipathies. Down went the window: Bang! No one came to the door: the callers knocked; still no one came. Finally the horse was unhitched and driven home.

By the way, it was that same Charles H. whose con-





duct at a country hotel occasioned one of Judge Aiken's droll jokes. The telephone was a rarity then, and was not lightly approached; but C. H. had come to Greenfield from the city, had some money and perhaps was not unwilling to impress the loafers about the hotel office. At any rate he was there with a friend, and in the presence of Aiken and Nims called up his home in Greenfield and asked his wife to get from his basement a bottle of venerable vintage and have it put on ice so that he and his friend might partake of its contents on their return.

His audience was quite impressed, and Aiken felt that something in the nature of a commentary was required; so the judge stepped to the phone, twisted vigorously the crank which rang its bell and, holding down the hook, pretended to hold a conversation with his sister Harriet at their home. "I wish you'd go down cellar," said he, "and behind the potato bin you'll find a salt codfish: please put it a-soak: I'm bringing Lucius home to supper.

There was a time, still visible in retrospect, when if one wished to communicate with a friend he went to his home or mailed him a note. Somehow there was more time, in that period before most of our time-saving inventions, than there seems to be now; and some of that extra time was utilized (I will not say wasted) in playing jokes, more or less practical and sometimes more or less crude. Probably William Blake Allen could tell of some perpetrated about the cracker-barrel in Henry & Smead's grocery store. The more firm the friendship the more anxious was each to "get something" on the other fellow which their mutual friends might enjoy.

Once, when the two men I have mentioned were dining together at a country tavern and the landlord's wife, who had cooked an excellent meal, was serving these much respected acquaintances of her husband, John improved the opportunity to reproach Lucius for alleged failure to pay his wash-woman, urging that she was a



poor woman and needed the money. "Glad you spoke of that, John," said Lucius; "I had meant to tell you that your wife failed to send home one of my best shirts with last week's wash."

John said to Lucius, one day, after some reference had been made to the sensitive throat of one and the nervous indigestion of the other, "With your throat and my stomach, we ought to make one pretty good man." "I guess so, John, if we could find a head somewhere," replied Lucius. Two brainy men, both careful in speech, they hardly seemed enough unlike to be such constant friends, but each found something especially attractive in the other.

Rufus Packard, banker, was one of the habitués of the old office. He was a nervous little man, and strictly accurate. Also a horse-lover, he once told my uncle in considerable detail the precise moment he left Mansion House corner, driving up Main and High streets, across Silver and down Federal, and how very fast his mare trotted. "What time was it when you got back?" asked Nims. "Oh, I don't know: I don't know exactly" said Packard, "but she went awful fast." He is remembered as also driving a pair of blacks. The Packard National Bank was opposite the livery office, and he was often watched to see if he would go back once or twice to make sure the bank door had been locked. An Ashfield horseman and farmer with whom Mr. Nims had a warm friendship, reported the short time in which the farmer's son George had driven "that new mare" to Northampton and back. "That was pretty fast work; wasn't it?" said Lucius. The honest farmer hesitated; then replied "I'd have thought so if it had been Charlie that told me."

In "hoss and buggy days" both Nims' stable and the Mansion House stable had a number of imposing hacks, used principally for weddings and funerals. Of course a really great occasion required the combined resources of both stables, so it made little difference which "got





the wedding" or funeral; but customers had their preferences, likes and dislikes. Once a large church wedding called for the liveliest efforts of all the hacks in town and time was of importance. One of Nims' drivers on one of Payne's hacks went for the groom's mother, but she knew the driver and that the order had been given to Payne and absolutely refused to enter the conveyance. They had to send another driver to take her to the church. Unfortunately, when she did get there, the bridal couple were just coming out of the building—and she had but one son and he had but that one wife.

Hacks were expensive, and so was their rental. Uncle Lucius had at his home a man digging a trench for a wall. "I could do this better Mr. Nims, if I had me pick," said he. "Where is it, Pat; could your wife find it if I sent a man from the stable for it?" "Sure, me wife is did: you ought to know that, Mr. Nims; I bought four hacks of ye at the toime."

John Kennedy, the very well known tailor, and Tim Claire were sitting one day in the livery office. Finally Mr. Nims closed his account books, turned his revolving chair about and opened the conversation which his visitors desired. "What are you doing now, Mr. Kennedy?" "Well, nothing at all, Mr. Nims." "Why; don't you make any clothes now?" "No, Mr. Nims." "I wouldn't think that Jack Mead could get along without you." Mr. Mead was then the very portly proprietor of the Union House, below the railroad arch, and formerly of the Franklin House on Clay Hill; and his well-tailored snuff-colored suits were known to all Franklin County. "Well," replied Mr. Kennedy, "I do still cut *his* clothes, Mr. Nims, but I have someone else make them up. He is very hard to fit." "Yis, yis, Mr. Nims," eagerly put in Tim Claire, "He's in the way of himself all the time."

An occasional caller at the office was "Vet" Smith, who advertised to "break—no educate" horses. He moved west, but returned with the same stovepipe hat and untidy vest; and when I said "I thought you went



west to grow up with the country" he replied "I did; and when I got to weigh 200 I came back." I have remembered a statement of his which has many applications: "God Almighty can't make a yearling colt in six months." Another old fellow gave my uncle a detailed account of an opportunity he had been given to "get in on the ground floor" of some new scheme. "Well, what did you say to that?" Uncle Lucius asked. "Huh, Lute; I sez to him 'How damned kind!' " That seemed adequate, though terse.

All sorts and conditions of men came to that office; came for horses, of course, but came also for advice: and they got excellent advice, if any, from the proprietor who knew horses perfectly, and men equally well. James S. Grinnell used to come there often. He used to hire "White Nellie" and the basket-phaeton. When he returned to his home at the head of Main street the wise old mare would sedately return to the stable without a driver. She had a wonderfully deep pelt, and I remember whipping her with about as much effect as beating a feather bed. Uncle Lucius used to drive her when he came home to dinner, if she was then hitched up. She would graze about the yard, and if she found herself in the corner under the apple-tree would cramp the wheel and back out. But if the blush rose was in bloom, White Nellie was hitched to the stone post by the pear-tree, because she had a sweet tooth for rose petals and would cross lawn and garden to reach that shrub.

Mr. Grinnell had been chief clerk in the Agricultural Department—which may be the reason for the two ginko trees in Greenfield—and when democrats were less common than today he used to be their candidate for lieutenant governor. I remember that at a time when their hopes seemed especially low, he looked into the little back office—crammed with coats, harnesses, whips, stairway, couch, horse blankets, a great box in which buffalo-ropes were packed away in tobacco, and with but a narrow winding passageway,—then he





sighed, and said "Lucius, do you think we might borrow this room for a democratic convention?"

Before Mr. Nims erected the brick block which has been occupied in recent years by a furniture store, his small wooden office stood there. His brother Thomas, who always owned "the darndest best dog that ever was," was so fond of them that he dreamed dogs. One morning he came down to breakfast and told us that his dream dog had run under that little old building and refused to come out; but Uncle Tom said he had just put one hand on the wall of that livery office and tipped it back far enough so that he reached under and yanked the dog right out.

I undertook once to tell someone how very strong Uncle Tom was, and what an immense weight he lifted with a harness when he was a young fellow on his father's farm in Greenfield Meadows. "Yes," the man replied, "he was strong, all right, but your Uncle Lucius was the only man who could take hold of the pole of one of those big hacks and pull it up the hill from under the barn." "Mostly in knowing how to do it" Uncle Lucius said, when I asked him about the matter; but his physique spoke for itself. I saw him when he drove a young horse up to the house one day and tucked the new tan lines between whip and dash. He was watching the horse, and as it jumped to start up the street he grabbed the reins. Horse and man each got half the lines.

Uncle Tom was, even in his eightieth year, a great handsome chap; and he used to enjoy driving several pairs of horses—particularly, perhaps, when he drove a barge-load around the hairpin bend on the old road up Sugarloaf. During the last weeks of his life I paid him many visits and he talked of "the old farm" and Shelburne mountain. He said, also, that years ago, while he was driving the big barge filled with young men to some event at Shelburne Falls, they got into an argument as to which was the better wrestler—an Englishman, who was superintendent at the Russell cutlery, or another



man. He told me that, to settle it, they stopped at a bend in the road and on the grass in a dell there was a decisive contest, and that ever since the place has been known as Englishman's Bend.

Tom's brother Henry (of whom Judge Aiken said to me "I guess he was the handsomest Nims of his generation") was a deputy sheriff. He was completely fearless, and it is said that as the youngest paymaster in the Union army he paid off troops under fire. His commissions bear the signatures of Lincoln and Johnson, with Stanton as secretary of war. At the time of my story Cheapside was a part of Deerfield, but known as "Toughend," and there were licensed saloons there. Uncle Henry had lost a foot from a bullet wound, but had arrested a "drunk" and Uncle Tom saw them just as Wiley & Russell's force came out of the factory and attempted to rescue their friend the prisoner. It looked to Tom as if his brother needed assistance. A man six feet two inches has a long reach, and he had sufficient weight and muscle, so he moved in an open space toward Henry, who was swinging his club and smiling; but the prisoner was no longer visible. When Tom got over near his brother, he saw that the prisoner was lying on the ground biting Henry's ankle—the cork one!

Their sister used to help with the book-keeping, and as she was long a trustee of the public library and had for years taught in the high school, she was acquainted with almost everyone in town and had many callers at the "livery office." Uncle Lucius and Aunt Delia used to bring home amusing accounts of the doings and sayings there. At one time she was rather puzzled by the frequent changes of costume of a Helbig boy, called Henry and Harry, who was working with the horses. Finally she discovered that "the boy" was twins—one employed in the barn, and the other "taking out teams" and returning others to the stable; each being appropriately dressed, but otherwise indistinguishable.

There was an extension phone in the basement, and





once when my maiden aunt took down the receiver in the office she was scandalized by the succulent sounds made by one of the men who was at the moment sending kisses to his sweetheart. That may have been "Honey-cooler," as one of them was known by that unique title. Another was dubbed by Mr. Williams "Captain Snap," as he was rather easily irritated and quick to express resentment. He was once comfortably seated in the warm office when "Pack" Galvin came in and proceeded to absorb a juicy pear with great gusto. Captain Snap, who had no pear, was greatly annoyed by the resulting sounds and departed hastily for the door, saying tartly before slamming it, "Look out, Pack; you'll wet your feet." It was he who,—when a very near-sighted customer wandering through the rambling barns blundered into a stall instead of a passageway,—sang out to the man who was above "feeding" the grain into the mangers, "Give that one four quarts of oats."

Pack was an institution. He met all trains with the "village coach", and to the returning traveller Pack Galvin appeared much as does the statue of Liberty to an American after a European tour. So familiar a sight was Pack and his chariot that they seemed a pre-vision of home itself. For a quarter they would transport you anywhere within reason, and somewhat beyond. One lady, leisurely preparing for a long journey, was so hurried out of her house,—trunk, bags, bundles and all,—by Pack Galvin that she was sure her clock must have been wrong and that a race for the train was necessary. Sure enough! The trunk was hastily strapped to the rack and Pack whipped up the horses which started on a gallop up Main street toward the station. "Whoa!" A great jolt and a sudden stop. Miss L. looked out the window and saw—a glorious dog-fight! Pack had glimpsed it on the way down, and had rightly calculated to return in time for the finish.

Fred was one of the more dimly shining of the stable satellites. I believe he was the one whom my uncle sent



out to spade up the asparagus bed south of the barn. That it took him a long time to do that—or anything else—surprised no one. When Uncle Lucius later viewed the scene of Fred's strenuous labors he found that every clump of sprouts had been completely uprooted! When Fred announced the arrival of his first baby, and was asked "Boy or girl?" he replied "Guess." "Boy?" was the next question. "Nope," said Fred; "Guess again."

My uncle's employees were continually making remarks which, as reported at our dinner-table by him, ranged from interesting to brilliant. He used to tell Judge John of witty comments made at the stable; and though the proprietor had most of the wit, he would attribute them impartially to the men. These tales were received with appreciation, and he supposed himself to be getting away with it completely, until one day—after a particularly clever sally had been accredited to an especially slow-witted person—John Aiken drawled "Lucius, you have some very clever men working for you."

The foreman, Cephas Smith, was really a most unusual man, and he rendered valuable services until a very advanced age. Without writing or reading, he noted mentally all that went on. He sat at the west window by the driveway, with one foot on the window sill, the sole of its shoe against the window-casing whose wood was deeply worn away. Then, at the end of the day, he would name to my uncle all the horses which had been out during the day, all the people who had hired them, where they had been and what he had told them the price would be; and he would account for all moneys taken in. One day was not like another, and there was a large number of horses.

Mrs. "Ceph" Smith was a famous cook, and took great pride in preparing occasional suppers for the boss and his batchelor friends at the little Smith cottage on Prospect street. Mr. Nims saw to their com-





fort in old age and settled the estate of the survivor.

Jake Bechtold was next to rank to Mr. Smith, and lived over the stores in the Miller Block after my uncle bought it. He looked out well for the interests of his employer, and sometimes worked the horses rather harder than their owner would have done. One rather flashy "gent", who liked to drive a fast pair but was very "slow pay," tried on a busy Sunday to hire a pair to drive to Conway. Jake demurred, and said that the horses were very busy and that the last ride was not yet paid for. "I'm going to pay for that right now" said the customer as he produced a five-dollar bill. Rosy-faced Jake beamed happily as he pocketed the money and murmured "That's fine; that's all right: now if you will give me another you can take the pair today."

Jake's parents, Stephen and Katie, lived in a cottage on a knoll, surrounded by apple trees. Aiken and Nims liked good German cooking also. When Katie, seated in a big rocking chair on her porch with the weekly *Gazette and Courier* in her two hands, read that Joseph Bradley's second wife had died, she passed on the information in these words: "Ste-von; I see by der paper that Jo Bradley his wife's dead again, alretty." Katie offered my aunt some nice apples, assuring her that they were all "hen' pecked:" of course Miss Nims soon realized that they had been carefully hand picked, and were not mere "windfalls."

The boss treated all his men with consideration and most of them appreciated his kindness. One, whose inefficiency was rather annoying, used to strike occasionally for higher wages; but Uncle Lucius always hired him back again, for the excellent reason that he feared the fellow couldn't get employment anywhere else. Considerably later than at the age when most men feel that Father Time has an appraising eye upon them, Mr. Nims began to lessen replacements of carriages, horses, etc. He would have liked to help two faithful employees to continue the business, but was not blind



to the future of the automobile and was unwilling that they should make a venture which might prove unsuccessful.

He had not then, nor did he for a considerable time longer, become old except in unperceived years. His retirement from business was as gradual as the falling of autumn leaves: things wore out or were sold and were not replaced and finally there was nothing left. Then he sold the real estate to Charles W. Nims and me on easy terms and we rented it for other purposes. He retired to his home, in which he was so intelligently cared for by a devoted wife that in his eighties he was still well and strong, though no other member of his family lived four score years. A neighbor, forced by illness to retire from active life, asked my uncle his "recipe for loafing." Mr. Nims replied, "You will find that loafing will take more of your time than anything you ever tried."

As a young man he used to make trips to the west to buy horses. The profits from judicious buying and selling went into his father's farm. He had a fine father, a great asset for a young man, and had a remarkable mother whose decisions were never questioned.

I well remember trying to minimize the failings of a neighbor by stating that he was good to his mother. "Good to his mother!", exploded Uncle Lucius, "He *ought* to be good to her: it's no credit to a man to be good to his *mother*." He was certainly the best of sons and brothers, and he asked no credit for his goodness to his kindred or to anyone else. He was too self-reliant to be what is sometimes called philanthropic, but no man was more helpful to his fellow men and his wit was kindly because that was his nature.

He was too able, industrious and thrifty a man not to accumulate some property in a long life; but he had a very true sense of proportion and did not overestimate the importance of money. Because of the conservative accuracy of his estimates, he was on the board of invest-





ment of The Franklin Savings Institution for many years, and many individuals sought his opinions on the purchase of real estate. I recall one man who feared that he was being asked about \$400 more than his building lot was really worth, and was told that if it was exactly what he wanted and he wasn't paying more than that amount above its actual value, he was "getting it cheap." On his books were many accounts for which no bill was ever sent. I think that he never asked more than 5% on a mortgage loan; and he probably never loaned an excessive amount. He owned very little real estate except that which he needed for his home and business. Had he chosen to buy and sell, it would have been very profitable.

It always amused me to think that "Rashe" Hoyt tried to sell Uncle Lucius (of all men) a part of the meadow at the north end of "the town street" of Deerfield. Its flora and fauna, since the day the first settler left that region to build "Frary House," had consisted of cattails and skunk cabbage, muskrats and bull-frogs; but Rashe laid a hand on my uncle's knee, and in his usual confidential tones said "I tell you, Lucius; barring the absence of Eve, that might be the garden of Eden." I suppose that demonstrates the truth—that hope springs eternal in the breast of even a realtor.

Sundays during the warmer part of the year were busy days for the owners of livery stables. In winter Lucius Nims attended the Second Congregational church pretty regularly. He always timed the sermon, and I am sure appraised with accuracy its value. He had standards of conduct from which he never deviated. For eighty years he knelt by his bed each night to pray; but during those four-score years I think that was unknown to any others, except his mother and wife.

A real Nims has certain characteristics: he thinks it foolish to tell what he is going to do, and unnecessary to tell what he has done: he is a creature of habit: he has a sense of humor—to be a bit whimsical is quite



Nimsical. Concerning their appearance and physique, as this is a story of both horses and men, I will quote that shrewd physician, Frank H. Zabriskie, who said of the Nimses "They mark their get like a Morgan horse." True it is that at the Nims reunion in 1914 I mistook a stranger's profile for that of my uncle; and, when I learned who the man was, I found that their nearest common ancestor was Godfrey Nims of Old Deerfield, who died about 1705. An old photograph of Major Henry Nims was mistaken for a picture of his cousin's grandson by that young man's sisters.

I have a framed picture of a young woman with her riding horse, which hung in Uncle Lucius' home during all his life, because when he was a child he used to think it a picture of his mother. In the old days one spoke of horses and Nimses in the same breath, and I have here continued the practice—being "a creature of habit." I have retold old tales, which have never been in print and are unworthy of that distinction, unless by repetition they have become Pocumtuck Valley history. My wife said that they must be true, because I always told them the same way.

Charlie Packard and I sometimes walk down street together and listen with real interest to our own old stories of Old Greenfield; and before we part one or the other says: "When are we going to write that second supplement to the History of Greenfield?" Perhaps this is its first chapter. I go into Hollister's jewelry store and Mr. Hollister—I call him Mister to emphasize the fact that there are some local people older than I am—he pulls open a drawer and produces an old document and tells me of things that happened before my recollection. We were born in the same room at west Main street, and as evidence of our fraternity he recently took from that drawer an onyx inkwell, which was used a century ago by one of my predecessors on the bench, and gave it to me. I use it daily. Charlie Winslow brings out his collection of photographs of Greenfield buildings that





have been burned up or pulled down; and all these things are as grist for my mill.

The last time that I took our former councillor Albert Wing to spend the night with me at High Pine we sat at the table in the out-door room and watched the shadows cross the meadows and the town, and climb to the top of the Poet's Seat tower; and then we sat before the stone chimney and fireplace, that I had built thirty years earlier, and talked of local men and events. Before we went to bed he said "Well, Francis; there are no odd characters any more", and I said to him, as I now say to you, "No; unless you and I have taken their places."



## FORMER PRESIDENTS

George Sheldon, John Sheldon, Jennie M. Arms Sheldon.

## FORMER RECORDING SECRETARIES

N. Hitchcock, Margaret Miller, Rev. R. E. Birks, Wm. L. Harris.

## FORMER TREASURERS

Nathaniel Hitchcock, John Sheldon, George Arms Sheldon.

## OFFICERS FOR 1942

*President*, Francis Nims Thompson, *Court House, Greenfield.*

*Vice Presidents*, Hazel Sheldon Nichols, Edward E. Whiting.

*Recording Secretary*, Margaret Harris Allen.

*Treasurer*, W. Herbert Nichols, *220 Main St., Greenfield.*

*Council*, the above officers and the following: Jonathan P. Ashley, Ernest E. Coffin, Mary W. Fuller and Margaret C. Whiting, until February 23, 1943; Frank L. Boyden, Minnie Ellen Hawks, Mary Adams Ball and Jane Atherton Wright, 1944; Helen C. Boyden, John W. Heselton, Lucy Cutler Kellogg and Agnes P. Sheldon, 1945.

## TRUSTEES

*George Sheldon Memorial Fund*: Agnes P. Sheldon, 1943; W. Herbert Nichols, 1944; Frank L. Boyden, 1945.

*Sheldon Publishing Fund*: Margaret C. Whiting, 1943; Hazel Sheldon Nichols, 1944; Jonathan P. Ashley, 1945.

*Old Indian House Homestead*: W. Herbert Nichols, 1946; William L. Harris, 1948; Margaret Harris Allen, 1950.

*Charlotte Alice Baker Fund*: Curators of the Frary House Estate.

*The Permanent Fund*: The Finance Committee, named below.

## COMMITTEES

*Executive*: President, Treasurer and Frank L. Boyden.

*Finance*: John W. Heselton, Hazel S. Nichols, F. N. Thompson.

*Auditors*: Ernest E. Coffin, Claude L. Allen.

## MEMORIAL HALL

Houses the unique *Sheldon Collection* of Colonial, Indian and pre-historic relics, and memorials of dwellers in the Pocumtuck (or Deerfield) valley. In charge of the *Executive Committee*, named above.

## FRARY HOUSE

Gift of C. Alice Baker. The oldest dwelling in this region; containing much antique furniture and furnishings. Margaret Harris Allen, Helen Childs Boyden, W. Herbert Nichols, *Curators of the Frary House Estate.*



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